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[A NEW VICTIM.]

## LADY ROSLYN'S MYSTERY.

### CHAPTER XXXIV.

LADY ROSLYN passed a few days in apparent calmness and gaiety. She drove in the park of a morning, received visitors in the afternoon, went out to dinner or to the Opera in the evening, attended generally by Vayle Malvern, who watched her as a hawk might watch a tender bird, whom he designed to make his prey.

The countess, though burning with anxiety, and torn by the promptings of outraged affection, though waiting with eager impatience for a letter or a message from the earl, never betrayed her feelings, except by a fluctuating colour on her fair cheek, an earnest look in her large hazel eyes, the expression of one who waits impatiently for news.

"She will wear her heart out at this rate," muttered Vayle Malvern, one evening, when he stole noiselessly upon the solitude of the countess, who sat alone amid the glitter and grandeur of her splendid drawing-rooms.

That evening Adine had pleaded indisposition, and had excused herself from accepting an invitation to a ball given at the house of a brilliant marchioness. Lady Roslyn was leaning her head on her hand, sitting close to a table in a recess; her attitude was singularly full of despondency. As Vayle Malvern, still, silent, and stealthily as a panther, stole closer to her, he perceived that tears were raining through her slender jewelled fingers, and presently a loud sob smote rather painfully upon the ear of the listener. He scarcely liked to see women cry.

"Are you ill, Lady Roslyn?" asked Vayle Malvern, in a tone of tender solicitude.

She glanced up haughtily when she heard his voice.

"Mr. Malvern, I did not hear you enter," said the beautiful Adine, trying to look proudly and calmly at him through her tears.

"You were so absorbed—pardon me—in your grief that—that, in fact, I hardly knew whether to ad-

vance or retreat. If I can be of any use to you, command me, I entreat you; command my life, if it be necessary."

The consummate actor made his voice tremulous with a false emotion. It never entered the thoughts of Adine to doubt his perfect sincerity.

"Alas, what can you do?" she said, plaintively. "There is, I suppose, no harm in my confessing what your eyes must read, that I am anxious at the sudden absence, the silence of Lord Roslyn. I have learned to appreciate his most noble qualities. I have learned the full value of a heart which I did not prize."

She paused.

"In short," said Vayle Malvern, with a heavy sigh, "you have learned to love Roslyn, unhappily for your peace. I know so much of him—I have known him from boyhood; he has, as you say, some noble qualities, but they are overgrown by a number of others, which if not absolutely vicious in themselves, will yet prevent his ever making you a good or happy husband."

Adine's face grew suddenly roseate, a lovely flush warmed her marble whiteness, and a certain flush in her large eyes warned Vayle Malvern that he had wounded the sensitive pride of the countess.

"You have meant well, doubtless, Mr. Malvern," she said, gently, "by telling me this, but you have not done wisely; I ought never to hear such things."

He gave a low laugh, tinged with scorn, half-angry, half-pitying.

"Then you prefer darkness and ignorance, regarding your husband's proceedings? You would choose to seek his love, groping helplessly in the dark? He who brings the lamp of truth, and shows you the emptiness of the hope you have relied on, shows you that you are offering tears and prayers at the shrine of an idol, who is deaf and mute, whose ears only listen to the sound of strange voices, whose words of love are poured out before usurpers of the affections which should be yours—he who brings this lamp of truth into the gloom of your life, you dread and despise as an enemy. Lady Roslyn, I am but a poor dependent, but I, too, have

very sensitive feelings, and your angry contempt is hard to bear; if my zeal be mistaken, at least it is honest."

Here the hypocrite put his fine cambric handkerchief to his eyes, and turned away his head.

"Mr. Malvern," said Adine, laying her beautiful hand upon his arm, "forgive me, I entreat, if I have wounded your feelings. I am most grateful to you for the kind interest which you take in my sorrows, and Lord Roslyn ought never to have married." She continued, "Yet you tell me he loved Mrs. Adrian passionately; he is at least capable of love?" said Adine, eagerly.

Vayle Malvern shook his head, and smiled sadly.

"Capable, alas! too capable, where the object is either beyond his reach, or where the affection is illicit, but what am I talking of? I should not mention these things to you. If you want to know the truth, you are a most unhappy lady, for it is very terrible, Lady Roslyn."

Adine had become white to the lips, and the shadow of a great terror fell over her exquisite face. It was as though some sculptor had carved out a lovely countenance in marble, expressive of woe, fear, and trembling inquiry.

"Tell me everything," she gasped out. "Has he eloped with Mrs. Adrian?"

Vayle Malvern made a gesture of contempt.

"Mrs. Adrian? I wish to heaven it were, for she is at least a lady of education, birth, and something like refinement, but Mrs. Adrian has deserted Roslyn. No, unhappily, where he now gives his devotion, his thoughts, what he calls his 'love,' the object is base, low, a beggar-girl, ragged, and importunate; handsome, with the bold beauty of a gipsy. Lady Roslyn, he has sent her down to the Manor, under the pretence that she was to be engaged as seamstress, and he has deceived the good housekeeper with his tales. Lord Roslyn now spends all his time with this pretty, worthless seamstress, and the village rings loudly with the scandal."

Adine seemed to listen to this cruel revelation as one listens in a dream; a sort of haze came before her eyes, and Vayle Malvern feared she was about

to faint. He hastily offered her a golden scent-case. She put away his hand courteously, but with a certain decision, which annoyed him in spite of himself.

"Thank you, Mr. Malvern, I am not ill. I—I believe I can manage to endure this—or even worse, if it be necessary," she said, firmly. "Meanwhile, I think I shall journey down to the Manor, and look upon the beauty of the mistaken girl who has won Roslyn's heart away from me. There must surely be some sweetness and refinement in her, which has tempted him to this sinful folly; perhaps if I warned her of her danger, if I spoke to him, even to him, he might listen to me—at least, I have a right to be heard."

"A right!" echoed Vayle Malvern, and a shade passed over his face, for he knew well that this straightforward action on the part of the countess would speedily unmask his villainy, and bring matters to a crisis. "If you presume upon that right, Lady Roslyn, heaven help you! Roslyn, whose his passions are concerned, has no scruples, and he is infatuated, heart and soul, by this seamstress at Roslyn Manor. He will bring against you those mysterious visits of the Count Lechelle; he will accuse you of terrible things. Yes, Lady Roslyn, your position is critical."

"Mr. Malvern!" cried Adine, trembling, "I almost think I will throw myself at my husband's feet, confess what seems mysterious in my conduct, and trust to his generosity. I have now something to forgive, since you tell me this tale of the seamstress, and he may perchance be inclined to pardon me for an act—an act I might almost say of childish imprudence; for of anything like sin, I am as innocent as a child. Yes, you," she went on, speaking to herself, "let us have done with mysteries; let Eustace and me forgive and forget; love in return must come of such affection as mine."

She was murmuring to herself the last words, uttered very low, and it was evident to the scheming Vayle Malvern that she had lost the consciousness of his presence in the fervid excitement of her feelings.

"Lady Roslyn," he said, speaking loud to arouse her from her soliloquy, "it is useless to deceive yourself with vain hopes of reaching Roslyn's estranged heart; it is sealed against you, locked up, walled about by adamant. I would fain have hidden this painful secret from you, dear lady, but your unhappy love blinds you to stern facts. You cannot see hatred in neglect, but the truth must be told." He ventured to take her hand and to look into her eyes. "Lady Roslyn, your husband detests you; he confided that fact to me before he left, using such language as a man and a gentleman should have scorned to use. I could say more. I could speak as one may, who knows human nature well. I might go on to talk of men who stop at nothing, when there is an obstacle to the attainment of their selfish ends. I might hint that Roslyn is one of those men." A new thought had leaped into the plotter's brain, and he hastened to improve upon it with a satanic sagacity. "This workgirl, Lady Roslyn, is lovely; she is ambitious. Roslyn adores her; she affects prudence, refinement, modesty, she schemes to become Lady Roslyn," he hissed the words in his excitement, "and I scruple not to tell you that your life is only safe by continuing to live separate from your husband. Now you know all."

He flung her hand from him in the excitement of speaking, and waited breathless for her answer. It came in tones, cold and strange, but firmer, more unflinching than he had deemed possible.

"Just now, Mr. Malvern, you told me this low-born rival was a gipsy beauty, bold and importunate. You regretted that Roslyn's wandering affections had left Mrs. Adria, who is a lady, and twined themselves about a beggar-girl. Where was the refinement, the mock modesty, when she begged in the London streets? Mr. Malvern you have described two women to me."

"Because this creature, this beggar-girl, has assumed another character with the neat, modest dress of the seamstress. She tells a long story of unkind parents, a miserable home, and assures Roslyn that her gaiety as a street ballad singer was only the cloak to a tortured soul."

"And does my husband believe all this?" asked Adine, her pale lip curling with scorn.

"Alas! would that I could say he did not," responded the infamous schemer in a dejected tone; "but his infatuation is terrible, it is hopeless, and your very life, dear Lady Roslyn, is unsafe at present. I could tell you—"

"Tell me nothing more," she said, rising with dignity to her feet, and waving her hand towards him, "you have told me enough to make me desire death. I suppose I ought to feel grateful to you, for the pains you have taken to open my eyes upon this horror—perhaps I may feel more grateful another time. At present I am only stunned, over-

whelmed by your communications. Good-night, Mr. Malvern."

She did not seem to see his hand extended in token of wishing farewell.

She passed him with a forced smile and courteous bow, and walked gracefully from the room.

"Good heavens how she loves him, and how he adores her!" exclaimed Malvern, pacing the floor in agitated excitement. "I shall indeed be a diplomat if I can keep those two apart, until one or both shall be worked up to the pitch of desiring a divorce, but what a game to play!"

He sat down upon an ottoman, and wiped his brow. His wicked heart beat fast and loud. His head seemed to rock and swim, he almost feared that his senses were leaving him.

"She might take poison," he said, suddenly starting up and pacing the room again, "she looked wild and pale enough for anything; if she would so far oblige me I should be on the whole satisfied, though shocked," he shuddered. "I almost hope she won't do anything rash of that sort, it would upset my nerves for a year, make me sleep badly, trouble me with nightmare fancies. No, no, a divorce is the thing; then Roslyn may shut himself up and go mad if he likes, the estates descend to me. Rawlins and Goldsmid would advance me twenty thousand pounds at once."

Before long Vayle Malvern retired to his own room, and he there lighted his lamp, locked his door, and sitting down before his writing-table, busied himself for hours, deep into the night, in writing letters. He threw down the pen at length, and laughed, thrusting his fingers through his long hair.

"Well, well, this is a bold game, a monstrous game," he said. "These letters will, I believe, finish the business up completely, so far as my lady is concerned. I think I may succeed in turning that strong love of hers for him into hatred. Women are changeable creatures. My lady must not meet my lord again at all, if possible."

After this Vayle Malvern went to bed and slept soundly, for he was much fatigued. He slept late into the next morning, loitering over his dressing, for he felt languid, almost ill. On descending to the breakfast-room, he perceived a note on his plate directed to himself. He took it up, glanced at the seal, broke it, then hastily ran his eye down the page. A curse escaped his lips, and he flung the note impatiently from him. His face was white as death: the news he had received had stunned him.

#### CHAPTER XXXV.

VAYLE MALVERN could not eat any breakfast. His paleness continued. He sat for some time like one in a stupor, staring blankly at the pattern of the carpet.

"I am ruined," he hissed out at length through his set teeth. "Last night I feared that she would take poison; would that she had! But instead of that she goes away by an early train, while I have lain sleeping like an idiot. By this time she must almost have reached Roslyn Manor. She writes me word in her childish, frank manner, that she is quite resolved to brave consequences, to come to an open understanding with her husband, to confess to him this mystery of her past. When once the tide of mutual explanation sets in, I shall be overwhelmed, destroyed by the waves of evidence that will rush forward to witness to my peridy."

He laughed bitterly.

"Oh, can I consent to lose this game—this great game, the stakes whereof are some of the noblest estates in England? No, one more move! One more desperate move! I will order my things to be packed. I will follow her down to the Manor. Roslyn has learnt to fear her, much as he loves her. If I am on the spot, look, a word, may warn him to place no faith in her protestations."

Vayle Malvern hurried from the room, and gave hasty orders to his servant. Then, with the renewal of hope and energy, came a craving for food. He hastily re-entered the breakfast-room, and began to eat some cold tongue and veal pasty, with relish. Looking up suddenly, he was surprised to perceive Hubert Sayton sitting, pale and distraught, on a large couch at some distance from him.

"Why, lord Sayton, you look like a ghost. When did you come in? Have you been here long?" he asked, uneasily.

"I entered the room about two minutes before you did, my dear Malvern," responded the young noble, mournfully. "I came to consult Adine, and I find she has started for Roslyn Manor."

"And what is the weighty matter in which you seek counsel?" asked Malvern, jocosely. "Since I am going down to the Manor, I will carry a message for you."

"I have just come from Lady Margaret's, my

ant's," replied Hubert. "She is in dreadful distress about that young lady, the beautiful Miss Erie, whom you have perhaps seen."

"No," replied Malvern, "but I have heard of her. Some new favourite of your worthy aunt's, is she not?"

"She is an angel of goodness and beauty," said Hubert, enthusiastically, "and two days ago she went out to walk in the park. From that hour to this, nothing has been seen of her. She was to have been married to a Mr. Polack. He called yesterday at my aunt's to see his promised wife. Lady Margaret was compelled to tell him the dreadful tale. He became furious, and was weak enough to accuse my aunt of conniving at the clandestine escape of Alix from her projected nuptials. We pardoned everything on account of her evident distress, and now we have entered with him into a league, which has for its object the rescue of Miss Erie. We have advertised, we have inquired at the private inquiry offices, we have offered rewards, we have done all that can be done, and with no result."

"We," echoed Vayle Malvern, with a laugh, "and what has my Lord Hubert Sayton in common with this pretty young adventuress, who has, perhaps, taken to the stage, or emigrated to the colonies, or heaven knows what. Some fantastic folks like to play this game of hide-and-go-seek, it has been somewhat fashionable of late. Come, cheer up, Hubert; did you seriously intend to supplant this Mr. Polack in the affections of the young lady?"

"I cannot joke on the subject," responded Hubert, "it is painful to me. I wished to ask Adine whether she thought it possible that a young girl like Alix might have fled away from her engagement with Mr. Polack, if she did not happen to love him—"

"Most possible, nay, most probable," returned Vayle Malvern, lightly. "Your charming friend will turn up again one day this week, I venture to predict. Won't you have some of this white Burgundy, Hubert, or do you prefer chocolate?"

"I think I will ring for hot chocolate," said Hubert, rising, "for I am quite famished, I ate nothing all yesterday."

The two gentlemen breakfasted together; soon afterwards they separated.

Hubert departed to haunt the offices of private inquiry, while Vayle Malvern sent for a cab, and started for the railway station. A journey of four hours brought him to the Roslyn station, a little out-of-the-world platform, waiting-room, office, and luggage-house.

The August sunset was reddening the woods and hill-tops, a few passengers of the humbler classes descended from the third-class carriages, looked after their small belongings, and trudged away in the direction of the village of Roslyn.

Mr. Malvern left his portmanteau at the station, and started for his evening walk in the same direction. Part of his road wound up a hill; on each side of him grew the rich Roslyn preserves, thickets where the elm, oak, silver birch, lime, acacia, beech, and sycamore had flourished for centuries. The timber on the Roslyn lands was the boast of the county.

The woods extended for miles. When Malvern came to the summit of the hilly road, he looked down on the other side, right into the picturesque village of Roslyn, which lay nestled among fruitful orchards and yellow corn fields at the foot of the hill. Beyond the village the road wound for a mile or two across a wide, breezy down, where the purple heather was just peeping forth at the first touch of autumn's rosy fingers.

The Manor lay a mile on the other side of the common, and thus Mr. Malvern had a walk of two miles before him, ere he could hope to reach Roslyn. He was not, it is needless to say, in the mood when a man can derive intellectual, or sensuous enjoyment, from the contemplation of yellow corn-lands, purple heather, bloom, or crimson sunset clouds. The beauty of the hour, the glory of the landscape, were dull and colourless in his sin-blinded eyes; he was hurrying on to plant disension in the house which had sheltered his infancy; he was about to wound and lacerate the affectionate heart of his generous kinsman.

All this evil he had set himself to do, that he might attain his selfish ends, and he was resolutely bent upon achieving the prize for which he had bartered honour, religion, self-respect, and a clear conscience. As he passed through the village, the innocent children playing before the doors dropped him curses, but he scarcely returned their greetings. All at once he perceived a young woman, simply and neatly attired, coming out of a vine-covered cottage, carrying a basket upon her arm. She raised her head, and under her large straw hat he recognised the beautiful face of Mrs. Dasham, the new seamstress. His guilty heart beat fast.

He hastened forward, and bowed to the young



person, raising his hat with all the respect he would have shown to a lady of rank.

"Mrs. Dasham, I am rejoiced to see you looking so well," said Malvern, gently; "the country air agrees with you; are you strong enough to undertake the two miles' walk to the Manor?"

"Yes, sir," responded the beautiful workwoman. "I have not, it is true, yet enjoyed the comforts of my new life longer than a week; but I am naturally of a vigorous constitution, and country air and country fare have already restored me to health. I drove into the village with a neighbouring farmer, who is gone on to the market town, but I shall quite enjoy the walk over the heath in the cool of the evening, especially as my basket is lightened of some cold fowl, ham, cakes, and a bottle of wine, which I have been giving to an invalid at that cottage."

"The bounty of the house of Roslyn is proverbial," said Malvern, falling into a walking step with Mrs. Dasham. "If you have no objection to my escort during the walk, I shall be glad to accompany you."

Mrs. Dasham coloured, she felt her position keenly as a dependent. Gratitude to the generous and kind benefactor who had, as it were, rescued her life from destruction, could not stifle the writhings of a sensitive pride, which had been born with her. She deemed that, as the seamstress of Roslyn Manor, she had no right to walk on terms of equality with the Earl of Roslyn's kinsman.

"This common is not altogether so safe in the evening as you might anticipate," said Vayle Malvern, in answer to her look. "Rough seafaring men, on the way to the south coast, frequently pass across it in bands. You might chance to encounter such gangs, if you wandered in solitary state over here at the time of the rising of the moon," and Vayle Malvern laughed. "No, I think on the whole, you had better permit me the privilege of accompanying you."

Mrs. Dasham complied in silence, and the two walked through the remainder of the village, and out upon the fresh breezy down.

"Lady Roslyn arrived, I believe, at the Manor some time to-day," inquired Vayle Malvern.

"Yes," responded Mrs. Dasham. "She seems a most beautiful woman, but proud; at least, she took no notice of the humble greeting I gave her. I curtsied to her with the deepest respect, but Lady Roslyn only passed on to her own room, with the very slightest inclination of her head."

Mrs. Dasham sighed, as though her feelings had been terribly wounded.

"Lady Roslyn is an absurdly jealous wife," said Vayle, smiling.

Mrs. Dasham started, and grew pale.

"Can that be the reason of her ladyship's offended manner?" she exclaimed. "Ah, now I see it all. Lord Roslyn is then compelled to be charitable by stealth. Why, that accounts for several things that have been said since I came to Roslyn by the housekeeper, who, I fancy, looks at me a little coldly. What a cruel, suspicious world this is!"

"What of Lord Roslyn?" asked Vayle Malvern. "Have you seen much of him, since your arrival at the Manor?"

"Not a great deal, but his lordship evidently commiserates my case very much indeed, and he is anxious to find my husband for me." Her voice faltered.

"It is singular that you should be anxious to discover one who has used you so ill. As for Lord Roslyn's profession of 'anxiety,'—here Vayle Malvern laughed—"excuse me, my dear Mrs. Dasham, if I refuse the least credence to such a supposition. I know how the matter stands. What do you suppose is the reason that Lord Roslyn has suddenly hurried from town, and buried himself alive amid the solitudes of Roslyn, when there are no visitors at the Manor, and the neighbourhood is dull: cannot your vanity discover a motive for this sudden seclusion? Mrs. Dasham, his philanthropy may be great, but it is outgrown by his gallantry."

Mrs. Dasham's face flushed crimson.

"I am the most wretched creature in the world," she said, vehemently. "I thought, here, I was secure, safe, and quiet, earning my bread respectably, and now I must go away."

"Why so? Why so?" asked Vayle Malvern, discomfited. "No, no, if you do anything rashly, or in a hurry, you will only cause the tongue of scandal to talk faster. But tell me, had Lord Roslyn had an interview with his wife before you left the Manor?"

"No, Lord Roslyn went away last night. He was going, I believe, to Southampton for a day or so, just to catch a glimpse of the sea, and to refresh himself by a blow on the beach, for he has felt ill lately."

"Fortune certainly favours me," said Vayle Malvern, gaily, to himself. "Lady Roslyn has made

her journey for nothing." Then aloud, "You must not talk of leaving, Mrs. Dasham; you know not what a prize you may fling from you, if you care to gain it. Lord Roslyn is madly, most madly in love with you."

She started violently.

"He has never spoken a word to me, save with a sad gravity, a touching respect. Mr. Malvern, I know what love is, and Lord Roslyn is not in love with me."

Vayle Malvern bit his lip.

"You do not understand him, and I do," he said, emphatically. "He makes me his confidant, long before he talks of love to the objects of his admiration. Now, I have seen him smitten many times, but I never saw his whole soul shaken as it seems to be by his passion for yourself—he aims at making you Lady Roslyn. I have received letters from him, in which he speaks with detestation of his wife, and he entreats my aid, that I may help him to obtain a divorce from the present Lady Roslyn. He will not speak of love to you, until he is confident that he can obtain freedom from the shackles which bind him to his wife."

Mrs. Dasham seemed petrified by the false news of Vayle Malvern.

She was only human; her husband had deserted her. The Earl of Roslyn was the handsomest, the bravest, the gentlest man she had ever met with. His estate was one of the very finest in the British Isles. Vayle Malvern was like Satan tempting this beautiful and naturally amiable woman with the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them.

"But you quite forget, Mr. Malvern," she faltered, "that I too have a husband."

"A husband? A man who very likely had two or three wives before he met with you. Would you fling up your chance of a coronet for such a villain? But I will give you Lord Roslyn's letters to read, letters which he has written to me on this subject within the last week. You must not show them to anybody. You must return them to me, and you must affect ignorance before him, but I think it right that you should comprehend how matters stand."

"I do not think I will see the letters, Mr. Malvern," said Mrs. Dasham. "I will leave Roslyn Manor."

"And lose your chance of a coronet? Cut yourself off from the brightest fortune which ever tempted woman, short of a crown? And here you will not have the cares and responsibilities of a crown. My dear Mrs. Dasham, allow me to offer you my congratulations, as being the most fortunate lady in England."

"You mock me surely, sir," responded the seamstress.

But even while she spoke, her heart beat high with a wild and ambitious pulse.

Vayle Malvern was as subtle a tempter as ever turned man or woman from the right path.

"Were you so weak, so childish, as to imagine," continued Vayle Malvern, "that when Lord Roslyn brought you into his town mansion, and himself seated upon you, sent you down to his country seat, and followed you in a few days, were you so weak as to fancy that the *roué* earl was actuated by philanthropic motives? When you have lived a few years longer in this merry world of ours, you will understand it better."

"Alas, I have hitherto found it anything but a merry world," said Mrs. Dasham, sighing.

"Don't speak of past troubles, my dear lady," cried Vayle Malvern, interrupting her. "I cannot see to steady this dusky twilight which has crept so stealthily over the country, but to-morrow I will meet you in the shrubbery, and read you some of the letters."

Vayle Malvern as yet hardly dared to trust the forgeries which he had executed into the hands of the young needlewoman.

"I had better not hear them; I had better not delude myself with such ambitious dreams," said Mrs. Dasham, in a weak, undecided tone.

Vayle Malvern glanced at her sideways, with contempt, for he saw that he had a woman to deal with, who was not devoid of her sex's vanity and ambition. Her mental vision was so dazzled by the brilliant possibilities which he paraded before it, that, for the time, her soul was blinded, and could hardly distinguish right from wrong.

"I feel convinced that I may at least rely upon your discretion," he said.

"Oh, I would not betray the earl for the universe," she cried, vehemently.

"That I am confident you would not," responded the tempter, gravely.

Soon after this point in the conversation, the moon sailed up from behind the hills, and threw her quivering white beams upon the moorland; the skies were lighted up with glory, the earth lay in half-shadow, the woods seemed to sleep in the repose of

the still air. But a spirit of fiery unrest had taken possession of the hitherto calm, if sad soul of the deserted wife.

The beauty of the balmy night failed to refresh or soothe her perturbed spirits, and her heart beat madly. Presently they heard distinctly the sound of a horse's hoofs on the common road behind them.

"Listen," cried Mrs. Dasham, grasping the shoulder of Vayle Malvern with a sudden and feverish alarm. "I know that is the sound of Lord Roslyn's horse, he left him at livery in the market town, that he might have the pleasure of the twelve miles' ride."

"For pity's sake, calm yourself," returned Vayle Malvern, impatiently. "I have told you, have I not, that Roslyn has every wish at present to conceal his feelings from you? If he imagined that you knew of them, it would spoil all."

For an instant a strong doubt of the veracity of Mr. Malvern assailed Mrs. Dasham. There was something unlikely in this wish of Lord Roslyn to conceal his feelings from her.

"Listen," continued Vayle Malvern; "if that be him, he has taken the lower road."

The plotter bit his lip with sheer vexation; riding at that rate, Lord Roslyn would be at home one good half-hour before he could hope to reach the Manor, and in that half-hour everything might be explained between the husband and wife.

"I must hasten on now," cried Malvern, in a tone of intense irritation, and he regretted the presence of Mrs. Dasham. "I wish to see Roslyn at once."

"Pray leave me," cried Mrs. Dasham. "I am not in the least afraid of the country people about here. I shall reach Roslyn in perfect safety, I have no doubt whatever."

"It certainly seems rude to leave you," returned Mr. Malvern; "but as you say you are not afraid, and since I have something of the utmost importance to communicate to Lord Roslyn, perhaps you will excuse me," and then the schemer sped away at his utmost speed, and Mrs. Dasham soon lost sight of his tall figure amid the shadows of the night.

(To be continued.)

## "ONLY."

A lie that is half a truth is ever the worst of lies;  
A lie that is all a lie can be met and fought with outright;  
But a lie that is half a truth is a harder matter to fight.  
Tennyson.

In the elegant boudoir of the beautiful and wealthy Mrs. Charlton may be seen a little gem of art—a painting of water-colours, the design of which has long been a subject of speculation and much interest to many friends, particularly to her daughter, a little miss of fourteen years, who had often pleaded to know what it meant.

The single word, "Only," is painted in letters formed by the entwining of the graceful myrtle, the beautiful forget-me-not, and here and there, almost hidden, falls a spray of the drooping hop-vine. This is the story of the picture, as Mrs. Charlton told it to her little daughter:

"Seventeen years ago, in this village, lived a young girl struggling with the hard, cold world for a support for herself and widowed mother. Although liberally educated, and possessing many accomplishments, she could gain no assistance from these means. Her mother was an invalid, requiring almost constant care; therefore Ellenor (we will call her) could avail herself of none of the various offers as governess or teacher. Either of these positions would remove her from home. So her only resource was the needle. While thus employed she could still watch over and care for her suffering parent."

"In this employment she was, for a time, very successful. Her patrons were among the *élite* of the town. One of them was Mrs. Charlton, a lady of kind heart, great liberality, and immense wealth."

"Ellenor Deering was very frequently at the home of this lady—going for and returning with work—frequently remaining through the day, during which time her absence from her mother was supplied by Mrs. Charlton's maid, a kind, experienced, and worthy woman."

"Mrs. Charlton's family consisted of two young girls, aged twelve and fourteen, a young girl named Evelyn Davenport, the orphan daughter of a very dear friend of Mrs. Charlton's, and the betrothed wife of young Doctor Charlton, the only son and centre of his mother's hopes."

"It was her dearest wish to unite her son with her friend's child; and to this end she bent all her energies. So far as a betrothal she had succeeded."

"Often during Ellenor's presence in this family she met Doctor Charlton, whose manner to the poor seamstress was ever respectful and very kind."

"When he was near she almost forgot, for the time, that she was not one of their friends or associates."

He not only rendered her respect, but enforced it on the other members of the family.

"Evelyn Davenport was very much inclined to make Ellenor know and feel her inferior position, and, to use her own words, 'keep her in a seamstress's place.'

"Mrs. Charlton, at one time, prevailed on Ellenor to come to the house every day, for a week or so, to get the girls ready to go to school. The first day of that notable time Ellenor's dinner was sent up to her in the sitting-room, where she was engaged sewing. She thought nothing of it, expecting either that, or to dine with the housekeeper. The next day her mother was not as well as usual, and so she was detained some time beyond the regular hour for presenting herself in the work-room.

"When she reached the house, she went up quietly, entered, and was getting her work out, when her attention was arrested by hearing her name. She listened. The next moment she heard Mrs. Charlton, saying:

"Miss Deering is not coming to-day, I fear. It is very late."

"She is offended for not being invited to dinner yesterday. I suppose she is so very genteel and ladylike, in her own estimation," said Evelyn Davenport, rather spitefully.

"And why should she not be in yours and ours?"

"Why was she not at the table, mother? She is refined and modest, and would be, I think, an excellent companion for my sisters. I would have them like her. She would grace the best society. It is her devotion to her mother which places her there. You know that it is only fortune alone makes the difference," said her son, in warm, earnest tones.

"How those kind words went to her heart, and stamped firmly, and for ever, the image of the one who uttered them, you may well imagine.

"My son, I have no real objection to Miss Deering's presence at my table, but you know it is not customary, and yesterday we had company—Miss Le Blanc. You know she is so very aristocratic, I don't know what she would have thought of such a thing."

"Oh, mother! Put away those thoughts and words, so unworthy of your good heart. Act right, never fearing or caring what your friends may say. Place merit before wealth. Make up in the future for yesterday's wrong."

"Then came forth a mocking laugh, and in a scornful voice these words, from Evelyn Davenport:

"Really, Doctor Charlton, you would, no doubt, like to have your mother receive Miss Deering—this piece of elegance and perfection—as a daughter. Upon my word, sir, you are very fond and careful of this young person. I think I will resign in her favour. She is an artful girl. Yesterday you sent her flowers. Yes, and peeled an orange for her. I do not care a straw for your affection, sir, if it be divided with such as she is."

"There was a silence for some moments, and then Doctor Charlton answered:

"Evelyn, what can I say to these false—yes, I must say it—unjust words? I am always with the oppressed, and those needing my help. I did not send her the flowers, I gave them to her; and she asked if she might give you part. I said 'Certainly.' About the fruit, it is true. I performed that service of pleasure for my mother and you, and do you think I would slight another in the same room, and at the same time? Never! And now let me tell you, dear Evelyn, you must try and conquer this unhappy disposition. Cast forth all unjust thoughts, or we shall never be happy. I would not, dare not, risk your happiness or mine by uniting our future, until you rise above your present unfortunate temper. We should be a miserable pair, indeed. I love you, Evelyn; but for some time past I have been watching with sorrow and many misgivings these grave errors. You must not doubt my actions. I would be above reproach. Do this, and be to me the gentle, loving girl of years ago," said Doctor Charlton, earnestly.

"Never will I try to change my nature for you, sir; and remember you have no right yet to dictate to me!" she angrily replied; and, going out of the room, she ran upstairs.

Ellenor Deering was spell-bound. She knew not what to do, or how to act. She should, she thought, have let them know of her presence; but she was so much astonished, her faculties quite deserted her. So she was unintentionally an 'eavesdropper.'

"Mrs. Charlton did not come into the room for an hour or so, and then asked, anxiously:

"How long have you been here?"

"Some minutes. I am very late, but my mother needed me longer than usual this morning," answered Ellenor.

"This evasive reply disarmed the fears of Mrs. Charlton, relative to whether their conversation had been heard.

"Ellenor thought it best for the comfort of all parties; and when Mrs. Charlton came in again, and said:

"Come, Miss Deering, the dinner-bell is ringing; we will go down," she slightly demurred, but the kind manner induced her to accept the apology for the neglect of the previous day, and so things passed on quite pleasantly during the remainder of the week. Evelyn seemed rather better tempered, yet Ellenor thought she could detect an occasional glance of deep malice flash from her dark eye.

"Time passed on. The girls left for school. Doctor Charlton to finish his course of studies, and Ellenor continued to receive work from Mrs. Charlton and Miss Davenport.

"One day when the poor girl had gone to return a piece of embroidery to her employers, Evelyn came to have a dress out. She was waiting when the seamstress came in, but not noticing a visitor, she went up to her mother, and said, joyfully:

"Oh, mamma! for that piece of work Mrs. Charlton paid me ten shillings! Only think of it!"

"It is like her. I expected nothing else. Mrs. Charlton is a very kind, liberal woman," answered her mother.

"The dress was cut and fitted, and receiving the promise to have it in two days, Evelyn left. A servant came for it, paid the usual price, and brought a little note, saying: 'Mrs. Charlton would not need Miss Deering's services any longer.'

"Ellenor was amazed at this. She called to ask an explanation from Mrs. Charlton, but was told always that the lady was engaged; and so she knew nothing about the reason for this unkindness.

"One after another of her patrons discharged her, and in a few weeks the once prosperous and happy girl was reduced to real want.

"She knew she should soon be alone in the world. But heaven was very merciful. With the rapidly declining strength the mind failed too; and the peevish, fretful sufferer became gentle, pleasant, yes, even joyous. She was a girl again—round her the friends of her youth; and every comfort and even luxury, she thought. Thus poor Ellenor was saved from the torture of having her mother sensible to all the surrounding poverty.

"A little longer, and with a beaming smile, which told of a vision of peace and joyous meetings, the mother's spirit passed from earth. Friends from the humble walks of life came forth, and with the kind minister performed the sad services for the dead, and tried to comfort the lone one.

"All was over. Sitting bowed with grief, heart and mind away with the absent, she heeded not the deep solitude surrounding her. The gentle knock at the door was unheard. At length a deep kind voice was sounding in her ear, calling her back to her lonely, desolate life.

"Miss Deering!"

"She raised her eyes and beheld Arthur Charlton.

"Oh, mamma! I know now; I thought only one could be so good and kind—"

"Stop, dear! let me finish my story before you begin your comments."

"Bending down and gazing at her with an expression of the deepest sympathy, he took her hand, pressed it, and said:

"What is it? Speak to me! Tell me what is the trouble?"

"Only tired of life—without friends; the only one is gone. All alone. Only I am left," wailed forth the stricken girl.

"Miss Deering, why have you kept aloof from your friends? Why not have let us know of your sorrow? Do not talk of being friendless. You are not. My mother—my sisters."

"No, no, not now. She sent me away. Oh! for only one friendly heart to feel and pity my desolation."

"Miss Deering! Ellenor! be comforted. There is some strange mystery concerning my mother's actions. Yet, if all the world desert, I will be proud to be your friend. Try and be calm, and let us consider this estrangement with my mother. Now, while I think of it, I imagine I already have a clue to it. Your sorrowful little word—so often repeated within the last few moments—may serve to explain it—the cause. Forgive me should I pain you, but I must be candid to help you. On my return, I noticed your absence, and inquired the cause. My mother answered that you and your mother were very ungrateful—that she had been deceived in both; and when she found out her error, had filled your place by one more worthy. That she was convinced of this by your never coming to ask an explanation when she discharged you. I need not say I did not believe this of you. I determined to find you and learn the truth. For several days since I have been very much engaged, and found it almost impossible to get a leisure hour. Last night I urged my mother somewhat for something more explicit concerning your case,

and learned it was from some remark of yours made in the presence of Miss Davenport, relative to an amount paid you by my mother for a piece of embroidery. Evelyn reported that you had entered the room, not noticing her, and said that 'Mrs. Charlton had paid you ten shillings only for that piece of work,' and your mother answered ironically, 'Just like her! Very liberal and kind-hearted indeed.' So you see, my friend, that little word only caused your trouble. I know Evelyn's faults and weakness, and I fear wickedness. I immediately divined how easily those words could be wilfully misunderstood, and I determined to come to you to-day for the truth."

"Oh, thank you for your kindness—your faith in my worthiness. I did use that word, but not as she said; I remember well. Oh, how cruel! how unjust! how wicked! and how I have suffered from it. I was so delighted with the liberal price paid, and returned joyfully exclaiming, 'Mrs. Charlton paid me ten shillings! only think of it, mamma!' and her words were as you have said, but in a voice of gratitude and truth. I called several times, but was always denied admittance. I saw a strange servant; she would take up my name, then return with the answer, 'Mrs. Charlton was engaged and could not see me.'

"Enough, Miss Deering. It is as I suspected. Evelyn's motive—my mother must know and feel how cruel she has been, and try to redress this terrible injustice. Good-bye for the present; be comforted concerning the future."

"He was gone. What a weight was lifted from her heavy heart. The mystery was explained. Two or three hours passed by, when she heard a carriage stop in front and then a knock on the door.

"Come in," she sadly said, and Mrs. Charlton was beside her.

"It is useless to detail the explanation, or how very much distressed Mrs. Charlton really was. She could not forgive herself for judging and condemning thus one without a chance for defence. She said they had had a dreadful scene, and a mortifying sorrowful explanation, proving Evelyn's falsehood and malice. Arthur had forced it on her.

"Poor girl! I loved her mother so much, and hoped so to see her the wife of my son. I fear now it is all over between them. Perhaps it is for the best. He is so good and pure, I fear she would never make him happy. She has gone away to her uncle's. I have just been to the station with her. Now, my child, you are to return with me, and take charge of the girls, who are home from school, and insist on remaining so, with you for their teacher. Not a word of objection; I am the suppliant, pleading for forgiveness, to prove which you must come with us," said Mrs. Charlton.

"Ellenor went, and remained for two years, beloved by all. At the end of which time, Mrs. Charlton, verifying her love and appreciation by the fervent blessing and warm embrace with which she welcomed the orphan to her home and heart, a daughter, in name and affection."

"Now, mamma, I know all. You are Ellenor Deering; I guessed it when you let papa's name slip out."

"Yes, love, you have only heard of and known me as Nellie Moreton; Ellenor Deering was my mother's maiden name. Now, Carrie, let this story warn you against evil speaking, exaggeration, and particularly remember the command, 'Thou shalt not bear false witness.' Evelyn has had a severe punishment, I fear, but I have not an unkind feeling for her. I shall call on her, and endeavour to be a friend to her. Her unkindness truly caused me great sorrow, but in the end greater joy. Your dear father has often said that he deeply feels the truth of those blessed words, 'All things work together for good to those who love the Lord.'"

F. H. B.

**THE NEW PARLIAMENT.**—It is said to be arranged that the new Parliament shall meet on Thursday, the 10th of December. The swearing-in of members will occupy that and the two following days. The Queen's Speech will be delivered on Monday, the 14th, and, in all probability, the division on the amendment to the Address will take place on the night of Friday, the 18th of December.

**ROYAL NEWSAGENTS.**—It is not often that kings and chiefs open news-stalls; but here is an instance. Mr. C. Bannerman, of Sierra Leone, has issued a new series of the *West African Herald*, and at the end of his prospectus tells his readers that his paper can be had of, among other agents, Abuhah, King of Winnebuh; at Jella Coffee, of Tay, the chief of that place; and in Aquapim, Akam Orobe, Dinkerah Wassah, Fante, and Dominassi Doonah, of the kings and chiefs of these places. The kings and chiefs are cautioned against giving credit—subscribers must pay in advance.





## OCTAVIA'S PRIDE.

BY THE

Author of "Captain Fritty," "Leaves of Fate," &amp;c.

## CHAPTER XXV.

MATHEW MERLE had evidence before him of abundant interest, when he found his way to the lodging-house keeper, who had agreed to take care of his effects, and any letters which might arrive. There were plenty, quite filling the fancy box into which they had been thrust, as fast as they arrived.

"Bless your eyes! here they are, every letter, and nobody's touched 'em, beyond the putting them into this nice clean place," said the burly host, taking out his pipe, and staring into the dark, wrinkled face of the old East Indian. "I allers told 'em you'd turn up in the night-time, and sure enough here you are! There's been a policeman here twice to know about you. Something to do with a drowned girl. Mother Woodstock knows about it. They've saved the clothes, you see. Your niece, wasn't it? Well, poor soul, her troubles are ended!"

"My niece!" exclaimed Mathew, his black eyes glancing over the letters, the latest of which he had torn open eagerly, "what about my niece?"

"Why, she was missing, and you went off, to search for her, didn't you? And they found her drowned. You hain't heard about it yet, I s'pose?"

"Found my niece drowned!" repeated Mathew Merle. "When? how? This week or last?"

"Bless your soul, no. But months ago. And there's her clothes down at the station-house now. Mother Woodstock identified them. And it's all recorded there about her death; they brought it in a suicide, I b'leve. But it's down, you can read it. Mina Merle, niece of Mathew Merle, lately arrived from India, identified by the mistress of the house, and all that."

"What!" ejaculated Mathew Merle, laying down even the precious letters of his son, and staring fiercely into the speaker's face. "Who's at the bottom of this plot, I should like to know?"

The man's face showed his bewilderment. And in a moment more Mathew regained his shrewd self-possession.

"Well, well, I'll look into it," said he, carelessly, "but it's a mistake, let old Mother Woodstock say what she pleases. I saw my niece alive and well ten days ago."

"That's a queer thing," said the man, peering curiously into the sphinx face.

But the old man was busy over his letters again.

## [MOTHER WOODSTOCK BROUGHT TO BOOK.]

He had seized upon the one bearing the latest date, and at the bottom there was a postscript. He raised a shout of joy and triumph when he saw it.

"My boy is coming, my George is coming. He called—why—why it is time he arrived. I may look for him any day. Oh, this is good news! I must run down to the owners of the Comet, and see whether they have heard from her at all. There, man, drink to the good luck of the good ship Comet!"

He tossed a silver coin into the man's hand, thrust the letters into his pocket, and went hurrying out, his face aglow, his very hands trembling with the joy of the news he had found. In the generous glow of his delight he even gave some money to the thin-faced beggar girl who held out her timid hand towards him.

"George is coming! And I have found out the girl's retreat. I shall work the rest to my mind. No one holds the clue, no one but Mathew Merle, and I shall have my way against them all. I will keep my eye on Miss Wilhemine, but I will leave her alone until George comes."

He found the owners of the Comet in good spirits likewise. The ship had been spoken by a steamer, having made a fine passage to that point. They were looking hourly for the signal of her approach.

Mathew Merle went off in such high glee that he did not notice a woman, in a plain dark shawl and bonnet, with a thick veil over her face, who kept at a slight distance from him, let him turn as he might.

He went down to Mother Woodstock, as he called her, and entered bluntly into the object of his visit.

"Look here, Mother Woodstock, what Satan's work have you been helping along? Who was that in the alouched cap, and high-collared cloak, who coaxed you into giving my niece that nice cup of coffee, which you took such pains to prepare? And what was you paid for helping about that pretended suicide, and the registered death of Mina Merle?" began he, the moment he entered the room where the lodging-house keeper sat looking over her newly-returned basket of laundry linen.

"Bless my heart, Mathew Merle! How you startle any one," exclaimed Mrs. Woodstock, so completely taken by surprise that she could not control her features, and looked the blank dismay she felt. "What ever do you mean?"

"Come, come, no nonsense, woman, I know the whole story, about the taking of the girl to a ship, and all the rest. In fact, I've got her home again, and she is here in England sound and well. Now what does it mean that I find her death registered, according to your testimony, and identification?"

The great red hands of Mrs. Woodstock were fumbling over the clothes, and she bent her head down to the basket, to get a moment's time to think. But that was just what Mathew Merle meant she should not do.

"Come, come," said he, "I'm going up with my story to the police. I can tell them something about your drugging that coffee, and when poor Mina was helpless, taking her clothes to put on some poor creature and dressing her in boy's garments. I can tell—"

"Good Lord, Mathew Merle, you won't give a body a chance to breathe? Why don't you ask me in civil fashion, and maybe then I could tell you everything you want to know," ventured the woman in an insinuating tone. "Sit down, won't you, and I'll bring in a mug of ale."

"I don't want the ale, but I am willing to hear the truth. Just own all, and you will save yourself a deal of trouble, now, I can tell you."

"Humph! There's other folks can tell, too. You're very much worried about your poor Mina, now. Time was, you hadn't any too much compassion."

"You won't make anything by that game. I'm the girl's guardian, and if she be stubborn and bad-behaved it's my place to help it. What I want of you is to know who that fellow was in the cloak, the man with the hatchet face and the gray eyes, and I want you to own that it's not Mina Merle who is buried in the pauper's grave. A sharp game somebody meant to play."

"They wasn't gray eyes at all," said the woman, promptly. "The eyes were great big blue ones, and looked oddly with the whiskers. I won't mind confessing, Mathew, if you promise it will be safe for me."

"A good deal safer than the other way. But I want to know that man. You don't remember—the eyes must have been gray."

"No, they were not. I'll stake my life on that, and if you don't mean to be cross, I can tell you more. He dropped a ring here, pulled it out of his pocket somehow, and there's a mark inside of it."

"Let me have it," said Mathew Merle, setting his lip, grimly.

She laughed slyly.

"But first I want you to say that I shall get clear of the trouble. I'll take your word for it, Mathew Merle."

"Of course you will. And if you'll make a clean breast of it, and help me to prove the dead girl was not my niece, I won't mind rewarding you, besides ensuring your safety."

"All right. Ask your questions as fast as you like, and I'll answer true, honour bright."

"First then, who do you think that fellow was in the cloak and cap, and false whiskers? I know you for a woman as curious as the rest, and I'll venture to swear you didn't let the matter rest, without trying to ferret it out."

Mother Woodstock shook her head, and struck her coarse hands together angrily.

"She was a cunning one, now I tell you. I did the best I could, and I only found out the ring, and that it was no man."

"No man!" ejaculated the listener, staring at her like one demented, "you don't mean to say that it was a woman."

"But I do, that is pretty clear to me."

"Let me see the ring," said Mathew Merle.

She thrust her hand into her pocket, drew out a long silk purse, once gay with steel beads, but rusted now and frayed, slipped the steel rings away, and brought forth a heavy ring with an agate stone, on which was carved what seemed a family crest.

The keen black eyes glistened with the old basilisk glitter as he looked at it.

"Well," said he to himself, "if the ring came from the Middletons, they are premature in adopting the crest of Wainwright Slope. It is a high hand somebody is carrying, that is certain."

"It was a woman," persisted Mother Woodstock, "you may depend on that. Now look at the letters inside the ring."

The old man held it up, and read the delicately traced characters there:

"Octavia, from her father."

"Humph!" said he, "that is worth taking note of, whether anything comes of it, or not."

And then he fell into a deep reverie. But the glad consciousness that was overflowing and bubbling up within him in almost boyish excitement soon dispersed the momentary gravity.

"Well, I am not going to fret over it to-day. But it is well for you, Mother Woodstock, that you concluded to tell me the truth. We'll get to the bottom of it presently. My George is coming, and he will look into it. My son is coming to England. The vessel is looked for every day."

And having told this, with as much proud importance as if he had informed her of his inheritance to a throne, he took his leave, taking with him the ring bearing the Wainwright crest.

The veiled woman came out from the pawnbroker's shop at the corner a moment after, and followed him, as before, to the very doorway of the second-rate hotel where he was stopping. Mathew tramped up the long flights of stairs, and his pursuer, after a moment's hesitation, followed, and as he took the key from his pocket, and unlocking the door passed in, she came on, and looked carefully, not only at the number of his door, but at those adjacent. She went back downstairs to the room allotted for the boarders' sitting-room, found the housekeeper, and was presently installed in a room on the same corridor, which commanded a good view of Mathew Merle's chamber door.

When she was safely alone in this room the woman drew a long, shuddering breath, threw back her veil, and showed Jane West's face, but, alas! with a lack of the old freshness and cheeriness. There were dark circles under the eyes, which shone with their old steadiness, but had also a feverish brightness. She looked worn and tired, but desperately earnest, and set upon some purpose from which it was plain to see, no idle circumstance could turn her aside. She left her door ajar, and sat down where she could catch the first movement from the room beyond. When the bell sounded, Mathew Merle was prompt to appear. He locked the door again, put the key in his pocket, and then leisurely descended to the dining-room.

Jane West came out stealthily and silently, a bunch of keys in her hand, and waited until the lodgers of that floor had descended. She did not feel herself a thief, or a meddler, when she tried first one and then the other, and she was prompt to say, when the chambermaid suddenly came around the corner with some towels on her arm:

"If you please, can you unlock the door for me? I have got the wrong key, and I've come back for a handkerchief."

Unsuspecting, the girl took her own key, and opened the door. Jane's alert eye searched the room, while a prayer that the object of her search might be there was in her heart.

She walked straight to the red silk handkerchief bundle lying on the bed, opened it hastily, closed it again, and walked out.

The chambermaid deposited her fresh towel, re-locked the door, and went her way. Mathew Merle, after his hearty dinner, came back, and sat down a little while for a nap. Then he wrote a letter, making an appointment with the Earl of Chichester. After

which he went out into the street, bought a small leather case, such as could be thrust into his inner pocket, and returning, he opened the bundle tied in the red silk handkerchief, took out carefully the book of red morocco with the gilt clasps, and the yellow packet of papers, and fitted them into the case, and put this into a pocket made inside his woollen shirt.

"One may as well be cautious," he said, "a valuable packet like that might be easily taken from me, and there's plenty who are willing to go to any lengths for it."

And having thus, figuratively speaking, securely locked the stable door, Mathew Merle walked down to the office of the underwriters, and watched impatiently the signals there announcing the approach of inward-bound vessels.

The Comet was still unheralded, but he saw one of the owners there, who informed him that she was sure to be in the river before another morning, as such a ship had been seen from below that morning, too far off for her private signals to be made out. But it was the Comet beyond any questioning.

"I'll go down to see Lady Mary early in the morning," said Mathew Merle, "and I'll have plenty of cash on hand when I meet George."

#### CHAPTER XXVI.

LORD RONALD FALKNER was floating on the sparkling wave of a lover's rapturous bliss, and was too happy himself to notice the haggard face of his uncle's newly-chosen Australian agent, or even to be aware that his mother was thinner, whiter, and weaker than on their first arrival.

The rose-coloured cloud floating around him hid the little signs of gathering gloom in the demeanour of his friends, but when Octavia showed nervous and restless symptoms, and was fitful and capricious in her gay moods, he roused himself to search for the cause, alarmed for her health, and never suspecting what Felix knew very well, that it was the mind which was diseased.

He called in Sir James one day, by what he deemed a very skilful stroke of diplomacy, and appealed to him for a confirmation of his theory, that his beautiful betrothed was wearing out her strength, in persisting to follow up the reckless gaiety of the party at Chichester Rookery.

Octavia was present and could not escape the physician's scrutiny. She was deeply annoyed, but tried to smother the feeling, and yielded her wrist to the examination of Sir James, the indignant blood leaping angrily through her veins as she said to herself:

"This is unpardonably stupid in Lord Ronald. If he had half the intuitive perception of Felix he would have seen that this would disturb and vex me."

"A feverish pulse, certainly," said the famous physician, "and I detect symptoms of nervous and sleepless nights. The young lady would certainly be much improved by rest and quiet."

"Rest and quiet then she must have," exclaimed the adoring lover. "You will not rebel, I am sure, dearest Octavia, remembering that the precious trust of looking after you devolves upon me, since your father is himself an invalid. You must relinquish these excursions and fêtes, and the drawing-room nonsense of evenings, but you shall not be left to grow melancholy. I shall devote my whole time to you. I will take you to ride, I will read to you. You shall have a boudoir fitted up especially for your seclusion, and I shall ward away all intruders. No one but your father and myself shall be allowed to enter. Ah, what more can you desire! It will be an elysium!"

Outwardly Octavia smiled, but within there fell a great horror. To be shut out from the excitement which alone kept her spirits from sinking into such a dead gloom of foreboding and dread—to be compelled to find all her entertainment in the society of her noble lover, whose presence had already grown tiresome, almost intolerable, from which she was thankful to escape—it was a sorry prospect for a spirit already fretted and chafed.

Again the thought rose, and was bitterly received: "Felix understands me better. He knows there is no elysium for me with Lord Ronald for my sole companion."

And a deeper stab also came to her:

"This is only the approach of the realization of my pride and ambition. What will it be, when I am fettered to his side for life?"

Yes, amidst the triumph and flattery of her envied position as the betrothed of Lord Ronald, for all her father's deep joy and proud hopes, Octavia was miserable; and it was not the pang of her alarm lest the lawsuit should be renewed, it was not the fear of losing Wainwright Slope, nor the dread of any exposure which might come, which pressed such sharp pain into her heart. She tried to cheat herself into believing it, but there were times when the truth

looked at her unveiled by any sophistry. Her heart had cried out for its true nourishment, and for bread she had given it a stone. It did not eat the meat that the stone was no common pebble, but a diamond set in purest gold.

She saw the cold, stern face of Felix, growing every day more haggard and ghastly, with a wild terror that would not be coaxed into quiet. Yet still she persisted stubbornly upon the appointed course. She could not descend to a lowly position. She, Octavia Wainwright, be willing to marry her father's secretary, the earl's business agent! No, she must shine before the world as Lady Falkner. Let it cost what secret pain it might, the brilliant destiny must be accomplished. And so Octavia smiled, and allowed Lord Ronald to withdraw her, with his lover-like solicitude, from the only scene which made her life there endurable. She was petted, caressed, and overwhelmed with his attentions, until she grew to shudder at the very sound of his coming footsteps, to shrink from the slightest touch of his hand.

Lord Ronald was singularly unfortunate in his method of bestowing attentions, and had none of that fine, subtle perception and tact, which would have shown Felix so unobtrusively, just when to leave her alone, and when to soothe and cheer by his companionship. To be sure, if Octavia had only loved him sincerely, she would not have wearied of his companionship, but such constant presence is the test of true love, and Miss Wainwright was found wanting.

General Wainwright had paid his congratulatory visit to Lady Mary, and the pair had enjoyed it vastly, their parental anxieties laid aside, picturing the happy future of their children. It was mutually understood that the sooner the wedding took place, the better suited the pair would be.

And when General Wainwright received a letter from Scrow and Scattergood, hinting that he must be prepared for a renewal of the suit, the latter had no hesitation in paying a second visit to Lady Mary, and on the plea of the uncertainty of his own health, gently insinuating that it was his ardent desire to see the marriage take place at once.

Lady Mary was equally earnest, and when Lord Ronald was consulted they obtained a willing and joyful consent.

The day was appointed by the trio before Octavia was consulted, Lord Ronald naturally taking it for granted that her father expressed the wishes of his beautiful betrothed. She heard them calmly when the matter was explained to her, and smiled a gracious acquiescence, but immediately after hurried away, out of sight, into the first retreat she could find, which chanced to be a little music-room opening between the library and the private parlour of the countess.

There she sat down, deadly cold, shivering from head to foot.

What had she consented to do? Aside from having with her own hand set the seal to her life-long wretchedness, she had voluntarily agreed to assist in an imposition, a fraud—what else could it be called? The earl and Lord Ronald believed her the heiress of Wainwright Slope and its generous revenue. As such they were willing to raise her to their higher station.

This hurried marriage was her father's work, to secure her against any retraction on their part, when the claim of the Middletons could no longer be concealed. Her cold cheek burnt hotly as she tried to picture what the world would say, and then she reassured herself. It would not make any difference with Lord Ronald. She had confidence enough in the depth of his affection to know that. He would as gladly take her portionless as with the generous Wainwright dowry. But there was a very different affair with them. If she could only have seen into Lady Mary's chamber, where that lady sat clasping her thin hands over her throbbing heart, murmuring:

"Oh, I feel like a thief and a coward every time I look into the general's honest face. What will they think of me, if the worst comes, and they learn that I knew all the time, and yet never told them?—allowed Octavia to sacrifice her brilliant prospects. Heaven forgive my selfishness, but for poor Ronald's sake, I must persist. And after all what need she care for the empty title, if she loves Ronald? There is no great wrong certainly."

Thus the two parties, mutually consenting to a cheat, consoled their fears, and coaxed the stings of conscience.

Octavia had but one more trial.

As she sat there, white and shivering, in the music-room, the library door unlocked, and Felix came in slowly.

Did he know she was there? He gave no start of surprise, only a satirical smile curled his lip, and a steely gleam in his gray eye betrayed his secret anger.



"Ah! Miss Wainwright. So I am in season to give early congratulations. There is quite an excitement in the household, over the delightful news just proclaimed. I congratulate Lord Ronald; he will have a bride who will wear his coronet with queenly grace."

Octavia was not unmindful of the disdainful anger of the tone. Her pride helped her to gather up her faculties, and face him, without betraying all the weakness of her heart.

"Thank you, I have no doubt Lord Ronald shares your opinion," she said, brushing the lace ruffles of her sleeve with persevering attention.

Such a look on her part never failed to rouse all the wrath of Felix's fierce nature. His sallow cheek grew hot, his eyes flashed, the thin lips curled angrily.

Octavia knew it, and secretly trembled. How the slightest gesture of that man could sway her proud spirit, while Lord Ronald's most passionate love vow wearied and sickened her!

"Miss Wainwright," said he, "be fierce and proud, cold and haughty as you like. You know very well a word from me to the earl can dash you down from this pinnacle of your success and triumph. Why should I hesitate to speak it? I, who lose nothing, and gain all?"

Her white fingers still played carelessly with the dainty ruffles. She assumed an air of languid indifference, which nearly drove him frantic.

"I don't know why you should; people are usually inclined to act for their own interest."

For a moment his anger rendered him speechless, then he burst forth in a perfect tirade of accusation, in the very midst of which he stopped, and said in a voice thrilling with the most piteous entreaty and tenderness:

"Octavia, Octavia, my proud, high-spirited bird, meant only to soar in congenial skies; beware how you allow them to thrust you into a cage, although that cage be a gilded palace. Oh, think what it is you risk—what a life you choose. After all, is rank so much? Think of it, a meaningless title, that does not show in a man's looks or acts, is no part of himself, shall that weigh against a tender heart which holds your allegiance—you cannot, you dare not deny it, Octavia. A love so pure, so idolatrous as mine could not fail to win return. You love me, and yet you will marry Lord Ronald. Octavia, Octavia, have mercy upon yourself, if you have none for me. It is no choice between ease and poverty. If it were, one could never blame you. But you know very well my wife will lack no comforts of life, if she fails to win its elegancies. It is only the temptation of rank and power. Believe me—oh—believe me, you will find it a poor and worthless thing. Pause, before it is wholly too late. Listen to me."

She had not stirred her eyes from the face, which in its pale passion seemed to reflect upon her the very soul itself. Scarcely had she breathed, only her fingers had fallen away from the filmy lace, and fastened, with an iron grip, on the massive gold circlet on her finger, in which was blazing the rare rose diamond of the Falkners.

A strong struggle shook her as with an ague. Felix was awed, and fairly faint with suspense, watched her silently.

She rose at last, whiter than the statue beyond, and almost as rigid looking.

"It is too late now, Felix, I must marry Lord Ronald," said Octavia, and went out slowly, as if the movement of her limbs required all her strength.

She heard with dull ears the malediction he flung after her.

Two hours afterwards he saw her in the drawing-room, receiving with graceful ease the congratulations and gay badinage of the company.

She was to remain only a week longer at Chichester Rookery, and the seclusion having been broken into, Lord Ronald merrily agreed that they should make one couple of a famous yachting expedition, which had occupied the minds of the guests for a week past. When that was over, Miss Wainwright was to return to her own home, the preparations for a magnificent *trousseau* and wedding festival were to be hurried-on, and Lord and Lady Falkner were to start, in six weeks, upon their bridal tour to Germany.

(To be continued.)

**CHINESE MUSEUM.**—A large number of Chinese works and curiosities have been imported into France of late years, and the Louvre now includes a Chinese museum; an immense number of specimens are also distributed over the various palaces; and it is said that the Empress has determined to have them all collected at Fontainebleau, where a Chinese museum already exists.

**WILL OF COMMANDER ROGERS.**—This officer, who died on the 5th of May last, has bequeathed a sum of 2,100*l.* in the Three per Cents. to the poor

of the parish of Lymington, Hants. The sum is in trust to the minister and churchwardens of the parish, who are on the 21st of October in each year to give 20 good strong overcoats of the value of 30*s.* each to 20 poor men of the parish or its immediate neighbourhood, and 20 good strong cloaks of the same value to 20 poor women. A sermon is also to be preached on the 21st of October in each year from the 103rd Psalm or the 14th John,—"To excite the rich and the poor to meditate on the mercies of God the Saviour."

**THE SIR RICHARD MAYNE OF 1888.**—In the eleventh year of the reign of Richard II. (A.D. 1388) a singular proclamation was made by the mayor, aldermen, and commons of the city of London, prohibiting the wandering of dogs within the city jurisdiction. Probably a perusal of the identical proclamation at the present time may prove interesting. The following is a copy: "To avoid the noise, damage, and strife that used to arise from the wandering of dogs about the city, it is forbidden that any person shall keep a dog accustomed to go at large out of his own enclosure without guard thereof, by day or night, within the franchise of the said city, gentel dogs excepted, under pain of paying forty pence to the use of the chamber. And if any-one shall make prayer for any person who shall do the contrary hereof, he shall pay forty pence to the chamber for such his prayer." Mr. Riley, the editor of the *Liber Albion* (originally compiled by John Carpenter and Richard Whittington), says that "the word *gentile* in the original may possibly mean 'gentle,' for pet dogs of the then known description."

#### BEAUTY AND BRAINS.

THAT lovely woman fulfils only half her mission when she is unpersonable instead of beautiful, all young men, and all pretty girls secure in the consciousness of their own perfections, will agree. Indeed, it is cruel to hear the way in which heady youth despises ugly girls or fading women, however clever, whose charm lies in their cleverness only, with a counteraction in their plainness. To hear them, one would think that hardness of feature, like poverty, was a crime voluntarily perpetrated, and that contempt was a righteous retribution for the offence. Yet their preference, though so cruelly expressed, is to a certain extent the right thing. When we are young, the beauty of women has a supreme attraction beyond all other possessions or qualities, and there are self-evident reasons why it should be so.

It is only as we grow older that we know the value of brains, and, while still admiring beauty—as, indeed, who does not—admire it as one passing by on the other side; as a grace to look at, but not to hold, unless accompanied by something more lasting. This is in the middle term of a man's life. Old age, perhaps with the unconscious yearning of regret, goes back to the love of youth and beauty for their own sake; extremes meeting here as in almost all other circumstances. The danger is when a young man, obeying the natural impulse of his age and state, marries beauty only, with nothing of more durable worth beneath. The mind sees what it brings, and we love the ideal we create rather than the reality that exists. A pretty face, the nervous nerves of youth, the freshness of hope that has not yet been soured by disappointment or chilled by experience, a neat stroke at croquet, and a merry laugh easily excited, made a girl a goddess to a boy who is what he himself calls in love and his friends call spoony. She may be narrow, selfish, spoiled, unfit to bear the burdens of life, and unable to meet her trials patiently; she may be utterly unpractical and silly.

Many a man has cursed, his whole life long, the youthful infatuation that made him marry. Take the case of a rising politician whose fair-faced wife is either too stupid to care about his position, or else who imperils it by her folly. If amiable and affectionate, and in her own silly little way ambitious, she does him incalculable mischief by exaggeration, and by saying and doing exactly the things that are most damaging to him; if stupid, she is just so much deadweight that he has to carry with him while swimming up the stream. She is very lovely certainly, and people crowd her drawing-room to look at her; but a plain-featured, sensible, shrewd woman with no beauty to speak of, but with tact and cleverness, would have helped him in his career far better than would Venus herself if brainless. And so he finds out when it is too late to change M. for N. in the marriage service.

Men do not care for brains in excess in women. They like a sympathetic intellect which can follow them, and seize their thoughts as quickly as they are uttered, but they do not much care for any clear or special knowledge of facts; and even the most philosophic among them would rather not be set right in

a classical quotation, an astronomical calculation, or the exact bearing of a political question by a lovely being in tartan whom he was graciously unbending to instruct. Neither do they want anything very strong-minded. To most men, indeed, the feminine strong-mindedness that can discuss immoral problems without blushing, and despise religious observances as useful only to weak souls, is a quality as unwomanly as a well-developed biceps or a huge fist would be. It is sympathy, not antagonism, it is companionship, not rivalry, still less supremacy, that they like in women; and some women with brains as well as learning—for the two are not the same thing—understand this, and keep their blue stockings well covered by their petticoats. Others, enthusiasts for the freedom of thought and intellectual rights, show theirs defiantly, and meet with their reward. Men shrink from them. Even clever men, able to meet them on their own ground, do not feel drawn to them, while all but high-class minds are dwarfed and humiliated by their learning and their moral courage. And this is what no man likes to feel in the presence of a woman, and because of her superiority. But the brains most useful to women, and most befitting their work in life, are those which show themselves in common sense, in good judgment, and that kind of patient courage which enables them to bear small crosses and great trials alike with dignity and good temper.

### SIR ALVICK.

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

ASPA JARLES scarcely noticed the contemptuous interruption of her two glutinous hearers. The dye which hid her naturally fair complexion was very dark, as dark as the tawny hue of a gipsy, yet it did not hide the deep, feverish redness of her cheeks and brow, as she continued the conversation.

She did not speak loud, nor was hers a shrill, sharp voice.

She spoke in a low, subdued tone, and her voice, even then, revealed its rich, deep musical tone, not at all unsuited to her sex, and yet very similar in depth and volume to that of Hark Varly, to that of Hugh De Lisle, also.

"Amos Jarles and Hassan Wharfe," she said, "I have been but three days with you. I could not despise you more had I been with you a century. You are both consummate, unscrupulous scoundrels."

Old Jarles clutched his goblet, but Hassan Wharfe as quickly coiled his arm and hand around those of his irate grandsire, binding them instantly, and whispered:

"Be cool, daddy! I tell you, as I told you before, she knows where and who the true heir of Ulster is, and she has a counterplot to spring on us if we are too hard upon her."

"I tell you," whispered old Jarles, in reply, "Hugh De Lisle is dead—he was the true heir. She knows who you are, who Hark Varly is—"

"She don't," said Hassan Wharfe. "She don't know who Hark Varly is. She don't believe he is her son."

"I tell you she does," urged old Jarles. "She thinks the true heir of Ulster is dead—you and I know he is dead. Sir Alvick Ulster, when he signed the death-warrant of Hugh De Lisle, signed that of his own son. Ha! Think of that! Signed the death-warrant of his own son, by Judas! And I believe he'd do it again."

"Not so loud, daddy," whispered Hassan, with a warning glance at Aspa Jarles, who seemed plunged in troubled thought. "She may hear you."

"I don't care a farthing if she does, Hassan. I tell you we have got her. She is ours. We have got Sir Alvick. He is ours. We will make the most of it, won't we?"

"There's Ross Chaffton, the father of Hark Varly. I wonder he is not here. And then I am a little afraid of him, Daddy Amos."

"He'll be here to-night. Never fear, my lad. But we will have him hanged—after Hark is all right in the marquisate. I don't like Hark. He rather scorns me, Hassie."

"I don't," muttered Mr. Wharfe, "and he don't like me, although we are cousins. But he don't know that we are cousins. He thinks he is the son of a marquis, when he is the son of a highwayman! What a nice waking he will have of it, one of these days! I hope I may be near when he hears the truth! He robbed me of Elvira Cline, Olin Cline's daughter, just when she had agreed to be mine, if I would obtain her father's pardon for all his rascally deeds. Not to be my wife—oh, no! I intend to marry Miss Evaline and her quarter of a million of pounds, no other, no less. Hark Varly! He scorns me, the hound. Always did, even

when he suspected that we were of close kin. But when we deceived him into the belief that he was the true and lawful Edward Charles, he would have spit upon us, me especially, had he not had sense enough to perceive that if he failed to keep upon friendly terms with us, he could never prove that he was either the illegitimate son of Sir Alvick Ulster and Aspa Jarles, or legitimate son of the highwayman, Ross Chaffton, and Aspa Jarles. He saw that he could not, without our aid, prove that he is the son of the late marquis. So he, in a lordly way, consented to follow our directions. But when once he is Marquis of Galmount he shall know the truth, and if he plays the Cæsar with me, I'll play the Brutus with him."

All this darted through the brain of Mr. Wharfe in a single flash, but he did not say aloud that he did not like his cousin, or whoever he was, Major Hark Varly.

Aspa Jarles now continued, rapidly:

"I repeat that you are two villains, and yet I cannot declare it to the world, for I am in your power. I know that you, either of you, can have me executed, strangled, hanged upon the gibbet. I know, too, that if I were more useful to you dead than alive, I would be dead. I do not say that you would murder me, but I do say that if you needed my death, you would see that I were dead, or out of the way. I never saw either of you, that I can remember, until three days ago. I never knew that either of you lived until a few days ago. Days of agony," she added, as she pressed her hands upon her forehead, as one does when in great pain. "I had forgotten that I ever had a sister. Those who reared me, the noble and generous Fitz-Osburns, never mentioned the names of my unfortunate mother, my brutal father, and my sister who had, at an early age, obeyed her degraded instincts and fled to London to seek that brutal father."

"Thank you, my darling daughter," remarked old Jarles, who had eaten and drank himself into a kind of stupidity, but who, nevertheless, continued to eat and drink, as if for a wager.

"But there were plenty who let me know how my silly mother had disgraced herself and name, by eloping with a beggarly fop from London, one Amos Jarles, an attorney's clerk. Of course I heard that from some envious school-mate or gossiping old woman. I was haughty, and made no friends, except the kindred of my mother—"

"Wait," interrupted Hassan Wharfe, coiling around a flagon of wine as if it were necessary to crush it, squeeze it, crack its sides, as an anaconda does a sheep before it swallows it—"I say. You have been with us three days, and in all that time, my dearly beloved aunt, heaven bless you, you have not spoken ten words except in reply to our question, after your first burst of terror and confession. You have acted as if in a dream."

"Heavens! I would that it were all a dream, and that I might wake up!" exclaimed Aspa Jarles, with a sob of keen agony.

Hassan Wharfe looked at her suspiciously, and muttered:

"By George! I may be a fool in thinking it. But I do think she has some nice counterplot of her own behind all this. I have had a tingling of my ears as regards that idea, from the moment she succumbed so readily to every one of our propositions. I may be wrong, but she may intend to spring a trap upon us at the very last minute. By George! if I hated anybody as I know she hates me and my pious old grandfather, I would poison several! See here," he said, "you have become very talkative of a sudden. You hurried to London when you found that we had sought you out, and you seemed—after that first outburst of confession of all that you saw in the Tangle and in Osborn Castle—half asleep or stupid till now, doing all we asked, and making no objection to anything—not even when we told you to put on that disguise."

"It suited me to be silent and submissive. It pleases me to speak now. I am sorry I ever confessed anything."

"No threats, no threats," snapped old Jarles. "You are in our power. When you are sure that you are not so, you may indulge in that perilous pleasure as much as you please."

There was a dangerous menace even then gleaming in the eyes of Aspa Jarles, but neither of her companions could read it aright, though Hassan Wharfe coiled and uncoiled himself uneasily. He did not at all like the haughty tone, the inexplicable air of defiance assumed by his aunt, although he believed her to be under his heel.

"I make no threat, Amos Jarles," she said, scornfully. "If you and all of your accomplices are disappointed in the termination of your plot, remember that you have forced me from my seclusion to take part in it. When I fled from Ross Chaffton I was compelled to abandon both of my children—one, the son

of Alvick Ulster; the other, the son of Ross Chaffton. You say that Hugh De Lisle was one of those children—the child of Alvick Ulster—and you say that Hugh De Lisle is dead. You know that Hark Varly is the son of Ross Chaffton, and you all say that I am Hark Varly's mother. Perhaps he is. I cannot swear to that—"

"We don't want you to swear to that," said old Jarles. "You shall not even hint at that. You know what you have got to do if it comes to that. You are to swear that Hark Varly is not your child. We can shield you from the charge of having committed bigamy—ay, trigamy, my lady; or we can prove that you knew you were committing the crime."

"So you threaten, and perhaps you can. I fled from London to the north of England, and there, under an assumed name, I lived in honest and most repentant seclusion for years, until a gentleman named Henry Ascham, of noble birth, loved me, and made me his wife."

Here the unfortunate woman covered her face with her hands, and seemed struggling to keep back her sobs.

Hassan Wharfe produced a long toothpick and tickled his red gums with it, while he displayed his white sharp teeth in a grin of delight.

"That made you a trigamist," he said, sneeringly. "I suppose you want us to believe that you did not know Ross Chaffton to be well and hearty, when you married Henry Ascham, now Lord Morton?"

"As heaven is my judge," replied Aspa Jarles, solemnly, and with a choking voice, "I did not know that he was alive. Even if he had been, I knew he could not claim me as his wife, for as he had a wife when he married me, I was not lawfully wedded to him. But I did not know that he was alive. I firmly believed that he was dead, for I had heard that the notorious highwayman, Ross Chaffton, was killed."

"Ross says they kill him in the papers at least twice a year," remarked old Jarles.

"I believed him dead. I had been unmolested for so many years that I thought I was forgotten by all. I ought never to have married Henry Ascham, at least not without having fully informed him how I had been twice deceived. But I can only repent and writhe in anguish now. I verily believe that had I told him the truth before I became his wife—"

"You mean his supposed wife," sneered Mr. Wharfe.

"As you will, Hassan Wharfe," continued the unhappy woman. "Had I told him, he would have received me to his arms, for he loved me—I know how he loved me—I know he loves me still."

"But he will not, you know, if he even hears the truth now, eh?" said old Jarles. "He'd be crazy. He'd rave; he'd roar. Then there's the two children of your marriage with him, eh? Clementia told me that when she discovered you, she first saw you walking in the avenue of Morton Hall, leading by the hand two noble lads, of seven and nine, she judged, whom you kissed, and called your darling boys, Neddie and Harry—wasn't that the tale, Hassie?"

"Right! Noble fellows, handsome little dogs, sprigs of nobility, children of my Lord Henry Morton, and his supposed wife, Aspa Jarles."

"My children! My poor innocents!" groaned Aspa Jarles, as her mind recurred to her happy home in the north of England. "You may never see your mother again. You may be cast off even by your father, dearly as he has hitherto loved you. I hid my secrets, oh, terrible secrets! in my heart, and now, perhaps, you are to be overwhelmed with shame!"

She continued aloud:

"Yes, I am the wretched mother of those two noble sons of their noble father. I sometimes heard of Sir Alvick Ulster. I heard that he was much at court, and, therefore, I never stirred from Morton Hall. Lord Henry was nearly always at sea, and when he did desire me to visit London I declined, until he gave up asking me to visit anywhere. We were happy there in the seclusion of Morton Hall, though I had a fearful weight ever upon my heart, a continual terror, lest some part of my deceived life might be told to Lord Henry. I had no desire to molest Sir Alvick Ulster. I left his punishment to heaven. I only wished to be left alone."

"I suppose you never thought of the two children you had abandoned, eh? Forged them, no doubt," said old Jarles. "Forgot them, and me, too, eh?"

"I believed they were dead, Amos Jarles. I tried to forget them, and all that had ever related to them. Scarcely two weeks ago Clementia discovered me, and all my hopes were instantly crushed."

"You recognized her at once, eh? Marked resemblance to me, of course—some more of the preserved fruits, Hassie. She said you turned as white as a sheet when she approached you. Nearly

fainted, eh? Women generally faint at such times, but you didn't. You bade those two noble sprigs of Ascham go and play in the garden while you would talk with your visitor. But you had very little to say to Clementia, only 'For heaven's sake, say no more! I will go to London! I will do anything you wish, only do not expose, do not ruin me!' That was all you said or could say, wasn't it?"

"Very true. I was shocked, bewildered, stunned," replied Aspa Jarles, vehemently. "I had not seen Clementia for I know not how many years, and I recognized her after a single glance, and a second told me that she was there to destroy or use me as she pleased. I did not know then that I was the wife of Sir Alvick Ulster. I believed that Clementia, with you to aid her, simply intended to extort money from me. I did not—how could I?—suspect so bold and elaborate a plot."

"Superb, wasn't it? Grand, isn't it?" cried old Jarles. "Here I had two grandsons, eh? Fine fellows of different styles—Hassan and Hark. Hassan, my pet,—not very fond of Hark. Come, thought I, I must provide for these lads in style. Ross Chaffton, old friend and crony of mine, comes along one day—"

"About two months ago," put in Mr. Wharfe, as old Jarles paused to drain a goblet.

"About two months ago," he continued, "along comes Ross Chaffton. He shows me several papers. 'What does all this mean?' says he. 'Read them.' I read them. Gad! My hair stood on end, it did."

"Where did you get those?" says I. "That's a story to be told," he replied; and I don't think, my lady Aspa This-and-That, you have heard yet where we got the documents, which made us think of seeking you immediately, eh?"

"I have not been told. You showed me copies of the originals, and said you were afraid to place them in my hands, lest I should tear them up. But I have no doubt that you have the originals. I do not care to hear how you got them. What is that to me?"

"It is pleasant to speak of it, my lady daughter—"

"Amos Jarles! You are at liberty to call me any name you please, fair or foul—but I beg you not to call me daughter. Heaven knows that could I, by opening each vein in my body, drain out every drop of Jarles blood, I would gladly do it."

"She's very aristocratic and very proud," sneered old Jarles with no little anger in his eyes.

"It's not that," replied Aspa Jarles, bitterly. "It is because you are so corrupt, so villainous, so barbarous."

"She's remarkably complimentary, really," said old Jarles, shaking his huge head. He had very large, very long, and very limber ears, so that when he shook his head they wagged, they almost flapped.

"Hassie, she is not very proud of us, is she? But I'll tell you how we came to gain possession of the proofs of the lawful, legal marriage of Alvick Ulster, now Sir Alvick Ulster, to Aspa Jarles, now called Lady Constance Morton. A little of that sherry, Hassie, to moisten my tongue."

Mr. Wharfe filled the old glutton's glass, and he emptied it slowly before he began his story of the remarkable discovery of the marriage papers.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

HAVING allowed his sherry to trickle slowly down his crane-like neck, the Adam's apple being very active in sliding up and down the while, old Jarles smacked his lips loudly and said:

"It was very remarkable, I may say providential, the discovery of those marriage papers. Ross Chaffton came into my office, as I said, and tossed a small packet upon my table."

"What does that mean?" says he. And I read 'em."

"Where did you get them," says I. "That's queer," says he. 'I'll tell you,' says he. And he did."

"You know," says he, 'one of our friends was hanged the other day, Billy Doon, you know!'"

"Yes," says I. 'Tried to save him, but I couldn't. Case too plain.'

"Well!" says Ross Chaffton, 'I went to see him, the night before. In fact, he sent for me. It was risky, for I was spotted, and the police were on the scent. But I went, disguised as a parson. Then Billy Doon told me to go to see his wife and ask for an old wallet he had hid in an old boot, in his attic. Said there were papers in the wallet that had the name of Aspa Jarles in 'em. Perhaps they might be of use to somebody. Then he told Ross Chaffton how he found the papers. 'One day—more than twenty years and more ago,' says Billy Doon, 'I was lurking in Osborn Park. I was a noted poacher in those days. I was lurking under a bush when I spied Mr. Alvick Ulster, him as is Sir Alvick now. He crept



along very sly, and looked so like a fox hiding from the hounds that I followed him, until he stopped in a very retired spot, and after looking in every direction began to dig a hole. I thought that a very queer proceeding, and I watched him as if I was all eyes. Having dug a hole quite deep, too, he took some papers from his breast pocket, read them over very carefully, tore them into a thousand pieces, crumpled them all into a ball, crammed the ball down into the hole, got a stick and punched the ball to the very bottom of the hole. Then he seemed dissatisfied with what he had done; reached down into the hole, pulled the ball of torn paper out, took out a flint and steel and tried to burn them. He couldn't strike a light. He cursed the flint and steel, threw them away and again pushed the torn papers into the hole. Then he filled up the hole, covered the place with dead leaves, and hurried away. When he had been gone awhile," says Billy Doon, "I went to the spot and dug up what he had so very carefully hid. Then I made up a wad of torn papers of my own, like that he had made, put that in the hole and arranged the place so that it should look just as he had left it. Little chance of making head or tail of a thousand bits of scribbled paper, thought I, but I carried them away, and laid them aside for a rainy-day pastime. I think I was a year, off and on, getting the bits in order. My wife sewed 'em together, as we matched bit to bit. Just after we had 'em all right, I was arrested and clapped into prison for nearly ten years. I served out my time, and found that my wife had married again. I forgot all about the papers, and so it went on for years until my wife's husband died, and as we could do no better, we married again. Then she told me she had the patchwork of papers yet. I did not know what to do with the matter. I was afraid of Sir Alrick, for he was chief magistrate of his county, and I was a regular gaol-bird. So I just kept still; then when I was arrested and condemned to be hanged, I thought I would get you, Ross Chaffton, as I knew you used to live with a Miss Aspa Jarles, to read the papers and see if you couldn't use 'em upon Sir Alrick Ulster and get my pardon."

"That was all Billy Doon could tell about the papers," remarked old Jarles. "But when Ross Chaffton got hold of them, he said to himself, 'Here's a mint of money! Here's gold and galore! As for Billy Doon, he may be hanged. This is meat for his betters,' and so he came to me for advice."

"I read the patchwork of torn papers, I did. First there was the marriage certificate of the parson, with the date and place of the marriage—away in Wales, you see. Then there was a leaf of a book, a leaf of the register of marriages kept by the parish clerk—plainly torn out of the marriage registry. Names of witnesses, too, their signatures; in fact, everything in legal style. Ross and I hurried to Wales; and we hunted up the parson, the clerk, and the witnesses over there, all who were present when Aspa Jarles was married to one Harlow Clayton. Then we searched in an old packet of papers which had been left by Aspa Jarles with Ross Chaffton, when she fled from him. We found many very nice love-letters, all signed, 'Harlow Clayton,' and all in the handwriting of Sir Alrick Ulster. Then we got Clementia to look for Aspa Jarles, we did. Clementia, luckily, found her immediately, and entirely by accident, for she went to the north of England only because we had a suspicion that Aspa Jarles had fled towards Scotland. That's the matter briefly, my lady, and you see how Providence befriended the good old man who needed repose in his old age."

"Not Providence," replied Aspa Jarles, bitterly. "It was he whom you have faithfully served all your life—it was the evil one who befriended you."

"Favours from any quarter gratefully received," said old Jarles, vibrating all over with delight. "Then we planned how to use our fortune. I can't say I very much admire my haughty grandson, Major Hark Varly. Hassie is my pet, he is. But after you fled from London, leaving both of your children behind you, Ross Chaffton recovered his son, and placed him out to nurse. A great lady—I mean Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough, the wife of the great duke—saw the child, conceived a fondness for it, and persuaded one of her poor kinswomen, Miss Abigail Hill, to take care of it. So the child was reared under the name of Hark Varly; and, as he grew up, became page, first to the Duchess of Marlborough, then to the queen, then captain of the queen's guards, and is now, by the influence of his powerful friends, a major, and perhaps a colonel. He was early informed that he was of doubtful birth. His natural haughtiness was so great that his protectors were forced to tell him. They could explain very little, except that no one knew who his parents were. But Ross Chaffton, his father, who admired him at a distance, and who needed, often, a friend at court, hinted to him that

he was one of the sons of Aspa Jarles, and that, perhaps, Sir Alrick Ulster was his father. He was far above the sphere of society in which Ross Chaffton moved, yet he conceived for the bold highwayman an ardent friendship—oh, how very attentively you are listening, my lady!"

"Should I not? Are you not speaking of my son?" replied Aspa Jarles.

"Your son! You think it possible that you might love him, eh?"

"I think nothing of the kind. I must think nothing of the kind," retorted Aspa Jarles, with great bitterness. "You have made it a condition of my being spared in this accursed plot of yours, that I shall never permit Hark Varly to know that I am his mother. You say that he is my son, and it is very probable that he may be. I have never seen him, nor do I know that he has ever seen me."

"Yes he has. Be assured of that," snapped Hassan Wharfe, darting at a dish of prunes, and coiling his arm around it.

He did not reach forward, and take hold of anything, not even of a dish, as other men do. He darted out his long, lean arm, and swept it around anything he desired to grasp, in a coil, his long fingers clinging to it, and sweeping it up to him suddenly, in a gust, as it were—as a serpent darts upon its prey, and draws it into its greedy, remorseless spirals.

It was not often that this amiable grandsire and grandson were treated to such bounteous hospitality as that of Ulster Manor, and each made the most of it, as we have endeavoured to show.

It was, in their opinion, a kind of triumphal feast, in honour of their entrance into the stronghold of the enemy. They had stormed the outworks, surprised the garrison, and already begun to taste the spoils.

"Yes he has seen you, my lady aunt," said Mr. Wharfe, as he drew the dish of prunes towards him. "You did not see him. We thought it best that you should not see him, knowing him to be your son. We did not wish to deceive him. It is a part of our plot that Hark Varly shall not suspect that he is your son, nor anybody's son, except the son of Lord Hayward Fitz-Osborn and Lady Alberta, Marchioness of Galmount. Mind that. He is proud, haughty, and all that, and though I believe he is as great a scoundrel at heart as ever I saw, if he suspected we were playing a part with him he would wheel on us, and be a very fiend let loose."

"You know him well. I know nothing of him," said Aspa Jarles. "He may be my son, and it is just as probable that he may not be. The child of Aspa Jarles and Ross Chaffton may be dead, and this young man may be a son of my sister, Clementia. It may be a part of your plot to deceive me as well as Hark Varly and others. I cannot tell. Yet you say he is my son, and, of course, being unable to say positively that he is not, I naturally am interested in hearing you speak of him. I do not think that I could ever love him, for no doubt he has learned to despise Aspa Jarles. Go on, Amos Jarles. You were saying that he conceived an ardent friendship for Ross Chaffton."

"Yes, he did, and Ross Chaffton has never intimated to him that he, Hark Varly, is his son," continued old Jarles. "Gad, I believe that if Ross Chaffton were to hint such a thing, Hark Varly would run him through on the spot. Once, in Ireland, in Munster, Ross Chaffton, unwilling that Hark Varly should risk his life in a duel with Captain Hugh De Lisle, hinted to him that he was very sure that Hugh De Lisle was also a son of Aspa Jarles, and therefore his half-brother."

"What cause had Ross Chaffton, or anyone else, to imagine that Hugh De Lisle was my son?" asked Aspa Jarles.

"To whose care did you consign the child of Alrick Ulster, when you fled from London, my lady?" asked old Jarles.

"To Simon Sturley, formerly huntsman to Lord Hayward," replied Aspa Jarles.

"And the child of Ross Chaffton?"

"I left it at the house of Ross Chaffton's mother."

"Very true. But Simon Sturley confided your child to the care of another, did he not? and neither he nor you ever heard of that child afterwards, did you?"

"You undoubtedly believe so," thought Aspa Jarles, exultingly, for she had a great secret of her own still in her heart, and that heart leaped with delight, as she saw that neither old Jarles nor Hassan Wharfe suspected the truth.

"Ah!" she continued to herself, "you were faithful to me, kind Simon Sturley. I would I could find you, for I may need your help in this matter."

She did not reply to the last question of old Jarles, who, indeed, waited for no reply, but continued:

"Neither you nor Simon Sturley—he calls himself John Roffton now—ever heard of that child again. But Ross Chaffton did."

"Ah! great heaven grant that he did not hear the truth!" mentally ejaculated Aspa Jarles.

"The child was carried to France," continued old Jarles.

"He is off the scent," thought Aspa Jarles. "The child was carried to Scotland."

"In France the child was reared for several years. Afterwards it was brought to England, and under the name of Hugh De Lisle. Ross Chaffton never lost sight of that child from the day he saw Simon Sturley place it in the care of an old French soldier, until within a few years. We know now that Hugh De Lisle is dead. We know that Hugh De Lisle was the child of Aspa Jarles and Sir Alrick Ulster."

"Very well. Have it so. No doubt you are far better informed than I am," replied Aspa Jarles, coldly.

We did not know this until Ross Chaffton informed us in London, after we had read and consulted over the patchwork of papers found by Billy Doon. Then, as we knew Hugh De Lisle was dead—shot, my faith, by the command of his own father—we made up our minds what to do. When Ross Chaffton and I went over to Wales, we visited a village called Glenvyth, where for several years Hark Varly had been reared, in his infancy and boyhood. Ross Chaffton knew that very well, for he had never lost sight of his son, being very glad that others had taken such excellent care of him. Naturally he made inquiries of the style and character the lad had borne in the village, and was told by an old woman that there never had been seen so fair and promising a child in that village since Lord Hayward, Marquis of Galmount, brought his infant Edward Charles there.

"The old woman had been the nurse of this infant, Edward Charles, and spoke so much of the beauty of the child that we who know the parties well, asked a hundred idle questions where, otherwise, we would not have asked one. The old woman was in her dotage, she was, but she remembered many things. She said that Edward Charles did not die in that village, she knew. She vowed that there was a mystery about the disappearance of the child, and admitted that she had received a large sum of money from Lord Hayward to keep her tongue still. My heart! nobody but Amos Jarles could have wormed her secrets from her—he half persuaded, half scared her. I got it all, though. The child Edward Charles did not die in that village, although there was a sham funeral and all that. But the child disappeared—no doubt of that. The old woman said that Hark Varly was brought to the same village, two or three years after; and, as luck would have it, she was selected as his nurse. She said the resemblance of Hark Varly to Edward Charles was astonishing; and but that she knew Edward Charles would have been three years older, she could almost have believed Hark Varly was Edward Charles."

"There's where you got the first idea to make Hark Varly a marquis," remarked Mr. Wharfe, triumphantly.

"Yes. Until then we had no idea of making a baronet of you, Hassie," replied old Jarles. "We, up to that time, intended to prove that Hark Varly was the heir of Ulster, the son of Sir Alrick and Aspa Jarles."

"Leaving me totally unprovided for," remarked Mr. Wharfe. "How very lucky it was for me that my honoured grandsire fell in with that old woman—bless her old garrulous heart and tongue!"

(To be continued.)

## MICHEL-DEVER.

### CHAPTER XLVIII.

WHEN the repast was over, Latourled Claire into the music-room, and asked her to play for him. She had become a brilliant performer on both harp and piano, and she asked him which he preferred.

"The harp, of course," he said, "for that will display not only your proficiency as a musician, but show to advantage the grace and beauty of your person. For the little while I have you to myself, I wish to enjoy all your powers of enchantment."

"You flatter charmingly," responded Claire, with a gay laugh. "I shall do my best to entrance you, but you must not expect to hear me sing like a prima donna. My voice has been thoroughly trained, but it is not one of great compass."

"It will please me all the better for that. I like music that speaks to the soul, and fashionable singing rarely has that power. Give me something soft and thrilling."

She placed herself beside the magnificent harp, swept the strings with skilful fingers, and after playing a prelude, struck into an old melody which she had learned from her father.

Latour listened a few moments, then threw himself upon the couch, and buried his face in the cushions. He presently looked up, and in a pained voice, said:

"Not that strain, Claire. It carries me back to my youth, and evokes too many painful memories. My father played it on his violin, and it is the first tune I can remember. He was master of the instrument, as you know, and could have retrieved his broken fortunes as a musician, if he would have consented to adopt such a calling."

"I have his violin," said Claire, "and he taught me to play upon it, too. Would you like to hear the old *cremona* again?"

"Above all things. The sight and sound of it would bring him more vividly before me than anything else could."

Claire left the room, and after a brief absence returned, bearing the carefully preserved instrument in her hand.

She smilingly said:

"I have brought this to cheer, not to depress you, Armand. If our father can look down upon us from his heavenly abode, he is blessing the reunion of his children, and smiling upon the son he unfortunately understood too little. I shall not play a requiem to his memory, for he is happy, I feel assured. A joyful man will please his spirit better, if it be now lingering near us."

As in the old days, in the far-away land of her birth, Claire struck into a gay air and danced in time to it through the room, the lights flashing on her airy and brilliant figure, displaying all its grace and symmetry.

Her brother looked on with delight, and when she paused before him at the close of her unique performance and made a deep salaam, he said:

"You are a skilful exorcist, Claire. The gloom that was creeping over me has been dispelled as if by magic. I have seen the famous dancing girls of the East, but among them there was not one to compare with you. Child, do you know that you wear the magic cestus of Venus, which must bring to your feet both young and old? I can understand now, and almost forgive, the infatuation that led young Courtney to act as he did."

With a brilliant smile she asked:

"Do you really think that no one will be able to resist me if I choose to play the part of a *Circe*?"

"He would be more than man if he could," was the reply.

An expression of triumphant power irradiated her face, and she impulsively exclaimed:

"How glad I am to hear you say that! Oh! brother, I have laboured for this end; I have tried to make myself irresistible, that I may yet bring home to the heart that outraged mine, all and more than he made me suffer."

"What! would you waste your fascinations on such a man as that? Do you believe him to be worth a thought from a *Peri* like yourself? My dear Claire, do not sacrifice your life to an idea. Thrust the memory of those days into oblivion; never speak or think of him, or I shall be tempted to bring him to an account for his conduct to you."

"But, Armand, I have vowed within my soul that Walter Thorne shall yet acknowledge that I was unlawfully put away; that our marriage was legal in all its forms, and that there was no just ground for repudiating me. I will win him back yet; make him adore me, and then he too shall know what it is to be deserted by the one he loves."

"Ah, bah! don't cherish so absurd a dream. He is unworthy of all that trouble. You are dead to him; live now for yourself and for me. Enjoy the brilliant life I shall give you, without casting back a regret. Heaven sends retribution, even in this world, to all wrong-doers, and you can safely leave this Thorne to his justice."

"I must do so till—till my rival passes from the stage; but then I—"

Latour interrupted her:

"I hope the wife who usurped your place will live till we are all ready to put on the robes of immortality. It will be best for you if she does; but seriously, dear Claire, I would not have a bright, sweet spirit such as yours marred, by thus hoarding thoughts of vengeance against another. How can you ask heaven to forgive, if you tenaciously hold to this insane purpose?"

Her face drooped upon her hands, and she stood silent a few moments. Then raising it, she quietly said:

"We will talk of this no more, Armand; but one thing must be settled. What name shall I bear in the character of a young widow? It must not be either yours or my father's, or gossip may make itself busy with my antecedents."

"Under what name were you enrolled in your school?"

"As the adopted daughter of Mrs. Courtney. I

went by her name, but I do not wish to retain that, when I am entitled to one of my own."

"You would not surely be introduced as Madame Thorne?"

"No. But I shall not give up my right to Walter's name altogether. I will translate it into your language, and call myself Madame L'Epine. How do you approve of that?"

Latour saw how deeply in earnest she was, and after sorrowfully regarding her a brief space, said:

"If it will gratify you to bear the shadow of that man's name, as you hold the dim relation of wife to him, I will not refuse my sanction; but it is given on the condition that his true name shall never be mentioned between us again. But that he has given me the power to claim you as my companion by acting in the base manner he did, I would not allow the same world to hold us both. As it is, it will not be well for him ever to cross my path."

Claire shivered, but she calmly said:

"I will mention him no more. Henceforth I am Madame L'Epine; that will suffice for the present. What the future may bring forth neither you nor I can foresee. Let us resume our music. I am sure that you also play on the violin; take it, and let me hear you."

Without uttering a word, Latour took the violin, and executed a difficult movement. Claire placed herself before the fine-toned piano, and improvised an accompaniment. Suddenly he seemed possessed by a musical demon. Air after air was played with the skill of a master, and Claire still continued to strike the chords that harmonized with them. At length he laid the violin aside, and said:

"I believe the spirit of my father has moved my arm to-night; never before have I played so well, yet I am much out of practice. Good-night, Claire. It is not late, but I feel exhausted, and I have something to do in my laboratory. You can amuse yourself with your books and music for the remainder of the evening. To-morrow you will have your friends to entertain, and I hope you will be happy with them."

He kissed her brow, and left the room as if unwilling to break the spell the music had left upon him.

Claire, still thrilling with excitement, tried to quiet her nerves by playing on, and till a late hour of the night the lonely experimenter in the distant tower faintly heard the vibrations of the music echoing through the walls so long unaccustomed to such sounds.

But in the absorption of his favourite pursuit, Latour soon ceased to heed them, or to think of the new influence that had come into his arid life. It was strange that a man of hard, practical sense, in the ordinary affairs of life, should have yielded his mind to the visionary schemes which filled that of the chemist; but no seeker after this delusive phantom was ever more earnest in his belief, that ultimate success would crown his efforts to discover the secret of the transmutation of metals, than M. Latour was.

Already had he wasted immense sums on this vain chimera, and large as his fortune was, there was danger that his crucibles would ultimately absorb it all. On this night he found that nothing would work well, and he finally concluded that he was himself unfitted for the labour he had undertaken. His nerves were unstrung, and at a late hour he suffered the fire in the furnace to slacken, and threw open the windows of the tower.

As he stood in the deep silence of midnight, looking out upon the blue vault of heaven thickly studded with stars, he suddenly felt as if a cold hand was laid upon his heart, and a spiritual voice seemed to whisper to his inner consciousness:

"You are risking all for naught; you will go on to the fatal end, but you have first a duty to perform by her who has no other to look to. Give, while you possess the power to do so honourably. Secure to Claire the means of living in the affluence for which you will give her a taste; that done, make what use you please with the wealth you have so hardly won."

Cold drops burst out upon his forehead, so strongly was he impressed that something not of earth was near him.

He turned slowly, and surveyed the brilliantly lighted room, but not even a shadow was visible; and throwing himself upon his chair, he muttered:

"Whether the warning were supernatural or only the suggestion of my own better judgment, it will be well to act upon it, and that too without delay. I shall die as my father did—alone, and in the night. Death steals on the men of our race as a thief in the darkness, and for generations not one has been able to escape the doom. I am not old, but I am broken down before my time by all I have passed through. My debt to my father must be paid with noble interest, for this enchanting child shall never suffer through me."

Late as the hour was, he opened his desk, and drew up the draft of a settlement to be made on Claire. The next day it was taken to his lawyer, and promptly executed; he gave her the chateau of Latour, with the small estate attached to it, and an income of thirty thousand francs was secured to her from other sources.

This done, the remainder of his fortune Latour considered himself entitled to risk in any way he chose, though he firmly adhered to the belief that he would eventually increase it beyond the power of imagination to grasp, and become the benefactor of the human race through the results of his chemical combinations.

A week later, when he presented this magnificent gift to his sister, she exclaimed:

"Thirty thousand a-year for my own use! It is too much, Armand; and how can you give me your ancestral home? I thought it was entailed."

"There is no such law in France now. Latour came to me through the will of my uncle, as it will to you through mine. I have no other on whom to bestow it, and I wish you to feel that you have as good a right here as I have. As to the income, it is but a tithe of mine, and you will find ample use for it in the brilliant circle in which you will soon become a member. Many Parisian women spend thrice as much annually on their toilette. Your allowance, with the presents I shall make you, will enable you to be what I wish to see you—one of the best dressed women in our extravagant city."

She radiantly replied:

"I should think so, indeed! The sum seems inexhaustible to me in so short a space of time as a year. I will not deny that I love splendour, but I love still better the generous man who has secured me independence for life. I should not have found it difficult to ask you for what I wanted, Armand, but it is as well for me to know how far I may go without encroaching on your liberality. I shall keep within my income, let temptations assail me as they may."

So Claire had then, but in the scenes in which she soon began to play a conspicuous part, she found that, with her extravagant tastes and careless disregard of money, it was not so easy to keep her promise as she had supposed.

More than once her brother came to the rescue, and paid bills for her so large that she feared even to look at the sum total. But he always consoled her by saying:

"What is mine is yours, to use as you please. As long as my fortune lasts, you shall enjoy it to the utmost, in the way most agreeable to you."

So Claire had new bills, gave with a liberal hand, and as she had said—she had her swing, happily unconscious that this golden Pactolus might fail, and her own settlement be all that remained of the wealth accumulated by years of toil and distasteful occupation beneath the burning sun of an eastern clime.

Yet what Claire so prodigally squandered was a mere trifle in comparison with that which was devoured by the homely furnace in the old tower.

Like the cry of the Moloch, it was ever, Give—give! and nothing was yielded in return save the residuum of that ponderous metal which weighed as a nightmare on the soul of the experimenter. Yet he still clung to his infatuation—still believed that a triumphant result would yet be obtained, and his labours eventually meet their reward.

#### CHAPTER XLIX.

Soon after breakfast was over on the following morning, a new and elegantly-appointed equipage was driven to the door, drawn by a pair of Arabian horses, which had been brought by M. Latour from the East. A driver and footman in livery stood ready to take their new mistress to Paris.

Claire was enraptured with this new proof of her brother's liberality, and expressed herself in glowing terms to him. He smilingly said:

"This is your carriage, madame, but I have ordered a pony phaeton for you, that you may drive yourself, as the English ladies do. Of course, one reared in the country, as you have been, knows how to ride on horseback, and, in my stable, is another Arabian, as gentle as a lamb, yet as swift as the wind. Saladin shall be yours, and you can order an equestrian outfit as soon as you please."

"Of course I shall do that, and lose no time in getting mounted. I am passionately fond of riding, and no gift could be more acceptable to me. You really overwhelm me, Armand, and, if I did not believe you to be as rich as you are liberal, I should hesitate about accepting so much from you."

"Hush, child! If I did not lavish my money on you, I should throw it away in some other manner less productive of pleasure to myself. To witness your radiant delight is a source of gratification to me."



I am thankful to be able to make one human being happy."

"You may feel assured that you render me so, my dear brother. I seem suddenly to have stepped into fairyland. *Adieu*. I shall bring back mamma and Julia to visit the good magician, who is better than Midas, for he turns gold into everything that can minister to taste and enjoyment."

Latour placed her in the carriage, and closing the door himself, said:

"I have business to attend to in the city, and I shall follow you in half an hour; but you will not see me, for I must consult with my lawyer. When I return I hope to find you established here with your friends."

Claire nodded, smiled, and the carriage rolled through the long avenue, in which men were busily at work, completing the renovation which had been commenced on the previous day. The long-neglected grounds had already assumed the trim and well-kept appearance of a gentleman's park; and the heart of the young housekeeper swelled with pride and exultation as she thought that all this had been done for her sake.

Then a sigh arose from the depths of her soul as she remembered her father—his days of toil and privation, wilfully endured, when his son was rolling in wealth, and anxious to use it for him as liberally as he was pouring it forth upon her. But it was too late to grieve for that now, and Claire, in the bright present, soon forgot the sombre past; forgot almost that she was the repudiated wife of Walter Thorne, with a vow of retribution registered against him.

On gaining the city she drove first to her *modiste*, and ordered a riding-habit and hat of the newest style. On reaching Mrs. Courtney's lodgings she found her quite ready to leave, and Julia was in the wildest spirits at the prospect of freedom from lessons, and the enjoyment of country pleasures.

Old Betty, too, was radiant, for the air of Paris did not agree with her, and the duties of waiting-maid had long since proved so onerous, that she had petitioned her mistress to allow her to assume those of cook in the modest establishment kept by her. Betty had learned to speak a wretched jargon, which she called Frenchy; she managed to make herself intelligible to the class she was thrown among.

Her foreign experiences would have been very entertaining if they could have been taken down in her own language, and spiced with her comments on the doings of the munshers, as she called all French people, irrespective of sex.

Claire laughed when she thought of the meeting between her old nurse and Zolaide, and wondered what would result from it.

Betty was sent out in a light wagonette in charge of the luggage, and the two ladies took their places in the carriage, accompanied by Julia. After a very pleasant drive they reached the lodge and passed under the shade of the trees that formed the long avenue. In some surprise at the neat appearance of the grounds, Mrs. Courtney said:

"From your description of Latour, I expected to find it in rather a dilapidated condition; but everything seems in perfect order to me."

"So it is now; my brother is a good genius, and he has literally caused the wilderness to blossom as the rose in the short space of twenty-four hours. Order has been brought out of chaos, for when I first saw the place two days ago it was almost like an Indian jungle. Armand is a wonderful man, for he has not only had this transformation accomplished, but he has already organized his household on a liberal footing, and brought to the chateau what he thought would particularly please me. My brother will try to make me happy, and I intend to be so, in spite of all drawbacks."

"I can see no reason why you should not, my dear. Your lot, after all your trials, promises to be a most fortunate one. Love and care are necessary to a woman's happiness, and these you will receive from your brother. Fraternal affection is quite as precious as conjugal, and often affords more serene enjoyment. An object to love is what the heart craves, and what matters it whether it be brother, child or husband, provided it is worthy?"

"I shall try to adopt your philosophy, mamma, and after my experience, I certainly shall not pine for wedded bliss. That would be the last degree of weakness, not to call it positive imbecility."

"Why, Claire, do you never intend to get married again?" asked Julia, with widely distended eyes. "You are so pretty that somebody will have you. I wanted Andrew to ask you first, but he would court cousin Emma. She is very pretty, but I love you best."

Mrs. Courtney had thought it best to conceal from Julia the attempted abduction made by her brother, and she merely accounted for Claire's absence that evening by saying that an accident had happened which led to a meeting with M. Latour, and he had

taken his sister to his chateau. She now coldly said:

"Do not talk nonsense, Julia. Andrew and Claire fully understand each other, and much as I am attached to her, I think she will be happier here than with us. When Emma becomes your sister, you will transfer your enthusiastic affection to her, and soon think no one like her."

"Cousin Emma isn't bright, gay, and bewitching as my Claire is, and I shall never think as much of her," asserted Julia; "but I shall like her well enough, I daresay, when she comes to live at the Grange."

"Of course you will, pet," said her friend; "but look—there is Latour. The central portion was once a feudal stronghold, and Armand says it was built centuries ago. More than once it has been besieged, but never taken. In the revolution a party of aristocrats took refuge in it, were attacked by the *cous-couettes*, and fought till the last man among them was killed. My brother's uncle had fled to England; his property was confiscated and a price set on his head. When Napoleon restored order again, he came back, and regained what was left of his fortune; but it would have been a poor inheritance for Armand, if he had not possessed something of his own to add to it."

Julia grew pale, and tremulously said:

"If people have been killed here, I shall be afraid to sleep in Latour."

"But, my dear child, you will not be shut up in the tower. My brother has appropriated that, and the wing we shall inhabit was built within the last thirty years. It is all modern and handsomely fitted up."

The carriage here drew up in front of a flight of terraced steps which led to the door. Stone urns, filled with plants in full bloom had been placed on each side of the flagged walk leading to the house, and through this fragrant avenue Claire conducted her friends, and offered them a graceful welcome to her new home.

She then led the way to the apartment prepared for Mrs. Courtney, and with the gleeful abandon of a child, pointed out all the improvements her brother had made in the brief space of time at his command.

But another agreeable surprise awaited her. On the toilette was a dressing-case of *papier maché* with mountings of gold of excellent workmanship. Within the open lid lay a slip of paper on which was written: "From Claire to her beloved benefactress."

Mrs. Courtney glanced at the words, flushed slightly, and said:

"You are a most extravagant creature, Claire; and I fear that you are attempting to pay me in costly gifts for what I have freely done for you."

"Indeed, you wrong me, mamma. This is from my brother, given in my name, and of course you cannot refuse it. I was not even aware of his intention to afford me this gratification. Let us examine the interior, for I think that Julia has not been overlooked, and we shall find something pretty intended for her. Armand delights in pleasant surprises."

Mrs. Courtney took up a parcel wrapped in paper, and labelled with her daughter's name.

"This is for Julia, and it was left for her to open herself, I suppose."

Julia eagerly sprang forward, cut the strings, and unfolding several wrappings of tissue paper, displayed an enamelled egg with her name set in seed pearls upon the side. A little examination disclosed a spring which, on being touched, opened the lid, and a tiny bird sprang out, quivering its wings upon a green spray. It sang a fashionable air, and when the performance was closed, returned to the nest within, and the egg closed of itself. The little girl was almost wild with delight.

"What an exquisite present," she exclaimed. "I have always wanted a musical box, and this is the most beautiful one that could be imagined. Why, Claire, your brother must be as rich as the ancient king I was reading about the other day, to be able to give so much away."

"My dear, he would give you and your mother half his fortune for taking care of me so long, if he could only induce her to accept it. The cost of these things is a mere bagatelle to what mamma has expended for me; but that is not what you must consider. You must comprehend the feeling that prompts the gift, otherwise Armand will consider his efforts to please you a failure."

"I believe I understand. M. Latour likes to see people happy, and I am sure he has made me so."

Her mother smiled and said:

"And I, too, Julia, am gratified by these elegant offerings to both of us. But, Claire, you must make your brother understand that these must be the last, or I shall feel tempted to decline his hospitality during my stay in France."

"Do not make such a threat as that, mamma,

though there is little danger that you would be allowed to carry it into effect. Armand has too much tact not to know how far he may go, but he feels the obligations I am under to you, and he naturally wishes to make some slight return for them. I will leave you now to prepare for luncheon; after that is over we can amuse ourselves till my brother's return. Dinner will be served at five, and he will be here then."

M. Latour came back in time for dinner, and the cordial pleasure he manifested in the society of his guests, made Mrs. Courtney feel perfectly at home in his house.

In the evening they had music, and when the two girls were tired of playing, they went out into the soft summer night, and promenaded on the terrace walk beneath the windows, leaving M. Latour and Mrs. Courtney in earnest conversation.

Their subject was Claire, and after returning his warmest thanks for all Mrs. Courtney had done for his sister, Latour went on:

"The crowning grace, dear madam, will now be to remain with us till Claire is fairly launched into society. A maternal friend will be invaluable to her in her first season, yet she objects to having a stranger brought hither as a companion for her. Your son will not care to return to his native land, till he has had time to recover from his recent disappointment; he can visit those portions of Europe which are yet unknown to him, and bring back a store of observations that will be useful to him throughout his future life. Nothing dissipates sorrow like travel, I know from experience. While Mr. Courtney pursues his travels, you can remain with your *protégée*, and guard her in her new career."

"I would gladly do so if it were possible, for I feel the deepest interest in Claire, and I dread for her the unlimited freedom and indulgence you seem ready to grant her. She is too young to be left without some guiding hand to restrain her, yet I cannot at present see my way clear to becoming the friend you think she will need. I have been long absent from my home, and I fear that my return is almost a necessity. I shall, however, be guided by my son's wishes. If he shrinks from going back at the time proposed, I must remain in Europe till he is ready to accompany me. Should Andrew wish to extend his travels, I will gladly accept the position of chaperon to my godchild. It is difficult to give her up even to you, M. Latour, and but for this unfortunate infatuation on the part of my son, I should never have given my consent to do so."

"I am not surprised at that, for Claire has already wound herself into my affections so deeply that I should have a hard struggle if I were called on to part from her. But she assures me that I shall never be required to do that. Her unhappy experience has disgusted her with the thought of marriage, although I consider her free to form new ties, if she can be won to love any other man than the one who so basely treated her."

"You believe as I do then, that Claire still cherishes a tender feeling for Walter Thorne, in spite of his shameful conduct to her?"

"I am afraid that underlying all her bitterness and scorn for him, is the memory of what he once was to her. Claire is scarcely conscious of this herself, but if such were not the fact, she would not so tenaciously cling to the hope, that she shall yet be reclaimed by him. She declares that she would only return to Thorne to bring retribution upon him; but to accomplish that, she must debase all the finer impulses of her nature, and become what I should be sorry to believe she could ever be."

"Claire must give up that fatal delusion, monsieur. If she does not, it will become the bane of her life. I rejoice in the agreeable future opening before her, as the surest means of giving her a rational view of her actual position. When she is a brilliant and courted woman of society, the memory of those wretched days must gradually fade away. She will have no time to think of them, or to resent the wrong of which she was the victim."

"She gave me a brief outline of her unhappy history," said Latour, "on the first evening we met, but it seemed to excite her so painfully to speak of those events, that I did not ask for details. But if you will give them, I shall be very glad to hear them."

Mrs. Courtney commenced with the arrival of Thorne in the valley, and gave a clear account of all that had occurred during his stay. She excused Claire's elopement by stating that the inexperienced child believed the consent given to her union with her lover by M. Lapierre, on the night of his decease, was sufficient sanction without appealing to herself.

When she had finished, Latour thoughtfully said: "It is a story which might be held up as a warning to every wilful and impulsive girl. I believe, after all, that our system is best. In your country too much freedom is granted to the young. In



[MRS. COURTNEY'S ARRIVAL AT LATOUR.]

France, a child such as Claire then was, would be too strictly guarded to allow her the chance to experience such a passion while she should have been occupied with her studies. I am only surprised that my father departed so far from the customs of his native land as to permit this stranger the opportunity to win her from him."

"M. Lapiere was so situated that he could not prevent it. I received Mr. Thorne as my guest as soon as he would consent to be removed, but the mischief was then done. The young people had fallen irrevocably in love with each other, for Walter Thorne was as deeply infatuated with Claire as a man can be. I have never doubted that he loved her truly and sincerely. I believe that he hoped to obtain the forgiveness of his father for the step he took, though I must admit that he acted most dishonourably in showing forged letters to your father and myself."

"If Thorne had been as sincere as you believe, do you think he could have given his hand to another woman?"

"He was betrothed to Miss Willard before he met with Claire, and his father held him to his pledges under a threat of disinheritance. He was not a man who could make his way in the world, and when ruin stared him in the face, I suppose he thought it better to give up the choice of his own heart than to bring her to poverty. He knew nothing of you, or of Claire's claim upon you, or the result might have been different."

"I only wish he could have known how gladly I would have purchased happiness for my sister at any cost, for it is a fearful thing to have the heart thrown back upon itself, as hers has been. Badly as that man has acted, she loved him; and he might have made her an affectionate and kind husband. As it is, she is cast a wail upon life, embittered against my sex, and ready to use her power to charm against the whole race of man. It is a dangerous career on which she is about to embark, but who can arrest her in it?"

"You alone possess that power, monsieur. Your influence can accomplish a great deal with Claire, for she already loves and honours you almost as highly as she once did her father."

He shook his head sadly.

"I am but a dreamer, and not a man of society. It palled upon me long ago, and I gave it up. Claire will be the life and soul of scenes that would now only weary me; and to others I must relinquish the task of guiding her through the maelstrom of fashion and folly into which she will so eagerly plunge. I can refuse her nothing that she desires, and I can-

not assume the onerous character of Mentor to one whose tenderest affection I am so anxious to appropriate."

"Yet it is your duty to guard her in every possible way."

"Duty is a hard taskmaster," he replied, with a smile. "I promise to do my best for her, but I cannot pledge myself to restrain her freedom in any way. She wishes to be presented to society as a widow, and that frees her from the trammels of young ladyhood at once. She also insists that the name of her husband shall not be entirely relinquished. She will call herself Madame L'Epine; and, unable to resist her entreaties, I have consented that she shall do so."

Mrs. Courtney listened in surprise. She said:

"From that I perceive that Claire is as tenacious of her purpose as ever. The only hope I have to save her from herself is, in the long life of her rival. While Mrs. Thorne lives she will do nothing against her husband, for she asserts that all she desires is to have the legality of her own marriage declared among those who make up his world. She could very well afford to bear the censure of people she knows or cares little about, if she could be induced to think so."

"I agree with you, and I shall try every effort to make her adopt our views on this subject. But we must be very tender with her, Mrs. Courtney, for she has suffered keenly, and no one can foretell what may yet be in reserve for her. I can never exercise authority over her, for she already winds me around her fingers, and does with me what she pleases. To strew flowers on her path shall be the aim of my life, and if I could pluck every thorn from them I would gladly do it. While I live I shall stand as a barrier between her and that man, even if his wife should die; but when I am gone she must guide her own bark, either to shipwreck or safety. I can only pray that it may be the last."

With a faint smile, Mrs. Courtney replied:

"I see plainly that you are as much the slave of this young creature as the most devoted of her adorers will be. She must possess some subtle charm for your sex that is inscrutable to ours, for she acquires influence over every man that is thrown into intimate association with her. My poor boy has loved her from her childhood, yet I was blind enough to imagine that when she was placed beyond his reach, he would forget his early attachment to her. I will frankly say that, fond as I am of Claire, I do not wish her to become Andrew's wife, for they possess too much of the same temperament to have been happy together. Yet perhaps it would have been better for both if fate had not thwarted their union."

"Perhaps so, but who can tell? We are but blind agents of destiny, and supreme intelligence alone can see what is for the best. We must leave results in the hand of heaven, and do what seems to us right."

At that moment Claire came in, followed by Julia. M. Latour asked for more music, and the three performed concerted pieces together—Claire on the harp, Julia the piano, and Latour the violin.

At a late hour the party separated for the night, and Julia held up her cheek to be kissed by her host, as she naively said:

"I like you, monsieur, and you may kiss me as Uncle Lapiere used to do when I was a good girl. I am going to make my beautiful bird sing his pretty song, and then pray to heaven to make you as happy as you have made me by your charming present. It is better than a live bird in a cage, for that might pine for freedom, but that this one likes his little nest is proved by his slipping back into it so nicely when his chant is ended."

"I am glad you like your little toy, *pétite*. Yes, pray for me, my child, for the prayers of such innocents as you, are heard by Him who has said that the angels of little children are always near Him."

He kissed the smooth cheek, pressed his lips to the brow of Claire, and offered his hand to Mrs. Courtney.

She smilingly said:

"Good-night. I have passed a most delightful day beneath your roof, M. Latour, and I have no doubt it will be followed by many others equally pleasant. I shall linger in these charming shades as long as I consistently can, and when I leave them I shall carry with me many agreeable memories."

"The longer you remain with us, madam, the better. I trust that your slumbers will be visited only by dreams as pleasant as your society has made the few past hours to me."

Claire accompanied Mrs. Courtney to her chamber, where she found Betty in a state of great elation over the prospect of a poplin dress, which had been sent to her by the master of the house.

Claire had talked to her brother much of her nurse; and, with his usual thoughtful kindness, M. Latour had remembered the old woman, while in town, and purchased for her what he thought would most please her fancy.

Half an hour later the château was buried in repose, save the tower room. There the tireless experimenter resumed his labours until day was approaching, but with no more satisfactory result than before.

(To be continued.)





[CLARENCE PARMOND'S FATE.]

## COPPER AND GOLD.

## CHAPTER XXI.

"I AM neither mad nor intoxicated," said Glenville, resolutely. "Oh, I know that you can kill me; but you had better hear all I have to say first. Here, read that—it was written by Clarence Parmond. When you have read it, sir, I will tell you how I got it and where its writer is."

He drew forth a small roll of papers from a tin tube, an inch in diameter and about six inches long.

The manner of Glenville towards Sherlock was very respectful, for he feared him—dreaded his strength, daring, and success in crushing all who opposed him.

Sherlock opened the roll of papers, and from their centre fell out a sheet of different colour and texture from the others, covered with hieroglyphic characters.

As Sherlock's eye fell upon this sheet he started visibly, darted a glance of surprise first towards the marble mantelpiece and then into Glenville's face.

"Yes," said the latter, "that is the traitor—the mantelpiece—but read."

Sherlock glanced upon the first page and asked, in a cold, stern voice, while his sudden paleness became even visible beneath the dye with which he disfigured his fair, florid complexion:

"Whose writing is this?"

"I repeat, sir. It was written by Clarence Parmond."

"There may be more of that name than the young sculptor," said Sherlock.

"I mean Clarence Parmond, the young sculptor—the son of Carlo di Magnasco, who was condemned for attempting to assassinate a priest in Rome. I mean Clarence Parmond, the lover of Hermione—Clarence Parmond, whom you warned me not to injure," replied Glenville.

Sherlock, who read a page at a glance, as it were, soon mastered the whole, which was as follows, in a clear, bold hand:

"What I here write reveals an intended crime of so great a magnitude that few will believe it possible. On the 3rd of August last, 1835, an order which read as follows was left upon the office slate of Randle and Co., marble dealers, St. Louis-street:

"A new marble mantelpiece is needed at No. — Toulouse-street. Call immediately."

"MILES SHERLOCK."

"My attention was called to this order by one of

the principals of the firm—I then being, as now, foreman of the yard.

"In 'No. — Toulouse-street,' I recognized the house formerly the property of Victor La Force, and in 'Miles Sherlock' I recognized the name of the man whose wealth and position permitted him to commit a crime for which I or any other mechanic, or labouring man, would have been hanged. There was a mockery of a trial, and Miles Sherlock was declared to have acted in self-defence by deliberately shooting Victor La Force through the head.

"I did not wish to meet with this man. I feared lest my disgust might be seen in my face. I had heard that he was overbearing and arrogant to those he deemed his inferiors, and such he undoubtedly considers all mechanics.

"It happened, however, that but few workmen were in the yard, and I reluctantly visited No. — Toulouse-street to see what was needed, hoping that fortune would favour me with the absence of its owner.

"Miles Sherlock was not at home, and as his servants were unable to inform me, I was obliged to go through the apartments of the house and examine the mantelpieces.

"In trying the strength of one in an apartment which the servant who accompanied me said was the private sitting-room of his master, a sheet of paper, which had been concealed between the mantelpiece and the wall, slipped through and fell at my feet.

"I glanced at it carelessly, and was surprised to see that it was covered with hieroglyphic characters, such as I had never seen. I had once found an old will similarly concealed, from the discovery of which I was the means of raising a worthy and impoverished family to the wealth to which they were entitled by law.

"This document may be something of the same kind," I thought. "These ancient houses sometimes hide important secrets. I will try to decipher these characters at my leisure."

"I cannot say that I thought the paper belonged to the man whose success at the gaming-table had made him master of the house. I knew that he had possessed it but a few days, and that it was not probable that he had ever seen the paper.

"The servant who accompanied me, though very intelligent, happened to be looking out of a window at the moment, and, rapidly folding up the paper, I placed it in my pocket without his knowing anything of the matter.

"Immediately afterwards another servant came in, and said that the room which needed a new mantelpiece was in another part of the house.

"I followed him, saw what was needed, and left

the house. I did not return, but sent workmen to attend to it.

"I have now briefly stated how I gained possession of the sheet of hieroglyphics which accompanies these pages.

"On the night of that day, when alone in my own room, I sat down, resolved to decipher, if possible, the meaning of those singular characters. I was not unskilled in the work, having always had a great fondness for puzzles of every kind.

"More than two hours passed before I became convinced that a certain character represented the letter A.

"It was daylight before I had fixed it as a certainty upon my mind that I had discovered all of the vowels.

"All the next day, while at my accustomed work, my mind was intensely busy upon that sheet of puzzling hieroglyphics.

"At night I again applied myself to the task, and now occurred what may and must seem incredible to everyone, but which I aver, most solemnly, to be a fact.

"A sudden drowsiness overpowered me—not strange when it is remembered that I had not slept for nearly forty-eight hours—and leaning my head upon the puzzle which racked my brain, I sank, or plunged, as it were, into a profound slumber.

"When I awoke, the sun was shining brightly upon the sheet of hieroglyphics, and near it lay another sheet, upon which was an elaborate and minute explanation of that which had puzzled me.

"This explanation was in my own, unmistakably my own, handwriting. While my body slept, my mind, freed from the inertia of the body, had rapidly solved the mystery, and my hand, moved by the mystic power of the mind, had written a translation of the hieroglyphics and arranged an alphabet, which, on trying, I found to be a perfect key.

"I do not attempt to explain this remarkable fact, farther than to state that instances are well known in which sleeping persons have solved abstruse mathematical problems which defied their waking eyes; have written very good poetry, when there was no rhyme in their waking hours; have composed music far better than they had ever made when awake—all these are well authenticated.

"I know that I solved the mystery of these hieroglyphics while I slept. I believe that I should have succeeded in doing so after great and patient labour while awake. I have only stated it as one of the strange facts which led to this revelation of a stupendous intended crime.

"I now give a translation of the sheet of hiero-

glyphics, word for word, and any one, after studying the alphabetical key which accompanies this statement cannot fail to do the same:

(TRANSLATION.)		
"No. 1—Hartly head.....	Griff,	2d—137
"2—Bierton ".....	Alms,	2d—44
"3—Marks ".....	Mant,	2d—36
"4—Sharp ".....	Clarke,	2d—50
"5—Waves ".....	Pike,	2d—75
"6—Victor ".....	Owlert,	2d—83
"7—Nugent ".....	Layfers,	2d—91

To these regulars add vagabonds ..... 1,200

Add men ready for anything, a force sufficiently large to overpower any resistance that may be attempted ..... 8,000

9,716

Inform of object at a quarter-past 1 a.m., Dec. 18—though date may be changed. Each band to act independently until the gold and bullion are aboard the Gretna. G. to drop down the river while riot is at its height. Riches, Hermione, Roulette. Quotations of gold this day, 1 1/7 premium. Extra care in concealing grand object from every band until moment of action. Each to act up to 18th Dec. as simple individual bands.

"This is all. In itself a great puzzle, apparently, as the sheet of hieroglyphics.

"Not so to me, for in it I recognized the names of two persons well known to me—Roulette and Hermione. The former the daughter of Harry Freeland, the blacksmith; the latter the reputed daughter of Carrol Glenville.

"The presence of these names instantly aroused my suspicions, and as I studied the language of the translation, I became convinced that someone had been planning a novel insurrection.

"As is seen, the style is very loose and disconnected, except in the mathematical precision of the list of names.

"I had, however, no proof as to the author of these characters. I had simply found a sheet of hieroglyphics behind a mantelpiece in the house of Miles Sherlock—nothing more. Were these characters traced by him or by anyone in his house? Was it not possible that the names of Hermione and Roulette had no reference to those whom I knew?

"Had the 18th of December mentioned passed, one, two, or ten years? I had no date of the year.

"Were the fourteen names in the list fictitious? This I resolved first to discover.

"Some were common names, and men bearing them no doubt existed—such as Victor, Clarke, Pike, Marks, &c. But there was one very singular name—Layfers; yes, and another—Owlert. Neither had I known or heard of anyone named Alms, Waves, or Mant.

"I first heard of Layfers as I conducted my investigation. He proved to be a very noted desperado, a man who had often been in prison, an expert burglar.

"Here, then, was one of the names well adapted to my suspicion, that some plot was on foot.

"One by one I found fourteen men whose names were exactly the same as those in the list. All had other names, also aliases, but every one had one of the names of the list.

"It was singular, I thought, that each of those men, without exception, were notoriously bad men—thieves, gamblers, ruffians and desperadoes of the place. Men of daring, too, and intelligent, fitted to lead in a riot, raid, or an insurrection.

"Having learned that the names in the list were the names of ruffians living there, names associated, some of them with every detected crime, I desired to learn if there were any such vessel among the shipping as the Gretna.

"I had already looked among the shipping list for a vessel of that name, and had failed to find any. But after several weeks, during which I had filled up the names of the list, I sought again, and found that a new and splendidly equipped vessel, large and admirably appointed in every respect, had arrived.

"I examined the Gretna closely. I made myself intimate with one of the crew, and learned that she had been purchased in Liverpool by Carrol Glenville or Miles Sherlock, it was uncertain which.

"Here, then, was some proof that Miles Sherlock had written the hieroglyphics. Proof, too, that the Hermione referred to was the reputed daughter of Carrol Glenville.

"I now began to watch the men whose names were in the list, and soon perceived that they went in pairs—that is, Hartly went with Griff, after whose name was the mysterious '2d'; Bierton with Alms; Marks with Mant, and so on down to Nugent with Layfers.

"I had concluded from the figures and numbers as follows:

"All the ruffians of the town and its vicinity have been organized into seven principal bands, in all making up 616 active members. The first column of names belongs to the captains of the bands; the second column to the lieutenants or second in command.

"There are, no doubt, idle and unscrupulous vagabonds in the place to the number of 1,200—fellows not regularly thieves nor desperadoes, yet willing to steal and rob, or even murder when crime may be committed with impunity, such as often arises during a riot—fellows who work for a day and lounge about doing nothing a week.

"It is well known that the people have lately been very unruly and insubordinate. It is therefore very probable that there would be a great number ready and eager to join in a great riot.

"The chief of all these leaders is undoubtedly the writer of the hieroglyphics, whose object is concealed from his subordinates, and points to leading the fast-sailing Gretna with gold and bullion, collected by the bands organized for that purpose. He then intends, while the riot is at its fiercest heat, when the town is in flames, to deceive his accomplices, except, perhaps, a few, and escape with his booty in the mouth of the river, and thence abroad, having also secured Hermione and Roulette.

"Who is this chief?

"I suspected Miles Sherlock. I am confident that I am right. He loves, as such men as he can love, Roulette Freeland. He is the reported suitor for the hand of Hermione Glenville.

"I found, on close investigations, that since the first day of January of this year, up to the day when I found the sheet of hieroglyphics, the 8rd of August, gold was quoted 1 1/7 per cent premium only on one day—the 4th of July; that is three days after the assassination of Victor La Force—three days after his murderer took possession of his house.

"I concluded, therefore, that the hieroglyphics were written on the 6th day of July of this year, and that the 18th of December refers to the 18th of this present month, at which date, unless the writer has changed the date, the blow will be struck.

"I have closely watched this man, Miles Sherlock, and have discovered as follows:

"He is a gambler, a rascal, an unprincipled man, an adventurer; personally, as Miles Sherlock, unknown to the very villains who are being made his tools; a man who, through his accomplice, Carrol Glenville, receives a large share of the daily plunder and pilferings, the nightly burglaries and crimes of the town; a man who is the chief of an infamous association bound together to violate the laws.

"To tell how I have discovered so much would consume too much space. I can only say that I owe my knowledge to keen and secret investigation.

"His boldness and the high position he occupies in society, his ostentation of great wealth, his fascinating manners, his deceptive and hypocritical charities, his skill in wearing disguises, have enabled him to move forward in his career of successful villainy, unsuspected even by the thieves who pay him tribute.

"Among these evil men he passes by the name of Captain Giles. They know him by no other name, nor do they suspect that 'Giles,' their sometimes associate, though very rarely, is the wealthy, aristocratic, millionaire gambler, the pet of fashionable society, Miles Sherlock.

"I write these pages on the night of the 14th of December, 1835. I write them that they may be read in case I am not alive to-morrow to say all that I have written. I have not yet completed my investigations, but I know enough to prove all that I have written, and what I have written, if placed in the hands of the mayor, will ruin the intentions and plans of Miles Sherlock.

"The blow is to be struck on the 18th, 19th or 20th, without doubt. I know this to be so; for to pursue my inquiries I have made myself a member of each one of the seven bands in seven different disguises, and each band has received, already, orders that every member shall be at the head-quarters of his respective band, under penalty of a traitor's death, at midnight on the 18th, 19th and 20th of this month.

"But I fear that I have been suspected. For several days I have seen evil-looking men hanging around the vicinity of my marble-yard. For three nights I have noticed suspicious-looking men digging my footsteps. Several crimes have lately been thwarted by warnings mysteriously conveyed to those who were to have been robbed. It was I who sent the intended victims their secret warning, and though many of the ruffians believe that Harry Freeland has been at work in thwarting their designs, it may be that I am suspected.

"It may have been discovered that Clarence Parmond is a disguised member of one or of all these

bands, and perhaps as I write men may be lying in wait to murder me.

"I know and I am sorry that some of the villains suspect the honest blacksmith, Harry Freeland, and believe him to be a spy upon them. He knows nothing of the various organizations, except that crimes are very frequent, very successful, and very rarely traced, or, if traced, still more rarely punished.

"Those who are occasionally arrested are ably defended, and they know that he who pays their lawyers to remove witnesses who are dangerous, furnishes those who swear falsely, or provides for their ease and comfort, if convicted, is the man they call 'Giles'; but, as I said, they do not suspect that Miles Sherlock is that man.

"And why? Because no less than three times, at the instigation of 'Giles,' that is, the disguised Miles Sherlock, they have plundered the house of Miles Sherlock!

"It is by such cunning means that he has created among the thieves the opinion that 'Giles' is a bitter enemy of Miles Sherlock.

"Carrol Glenville is an accomplice of these villains—Carrol Glenville, the rich man.

"This 'Giles'—that is, Miles Sherlock himself—has made his dupes believe that he rents two rooms of Miles Sherlock, in his house. They go there by appointment—that is, the fourteen leaders—to confer with 'Giles.' They see Miles Sherlock, but have never recognized in him their beloved and respected 'Giles.'

"'Giles' appears as a very old man, with white beard, white hair, white eyebrows, and speaks in a cracked voice. Yet he never is seen among the thieves in the streets, or in, and other places except at night, and always wears a mask when he appears. Only in 'Giles's' room does he show his face, and then, as I have said, so adroitly disguised that the most intimate friends of Miles Sherlock would fail to recognize in him the aged 'Giles.'

"To-morrow, I repeat, I intend to lay bare all I know to the mayor. I need more evidence to convict beyond a shadow of doubt, or I would have done so to-day.

"If I am attacked, as I fear I may be, these pages will thwart at least, if no more, this stupendous intended crime. I shall leave them with a friend to give to the mayor in case I am not at my marble-yard by nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

"CLARENCE PARMOND.

"December 14th, 1835."

Miles Sherlock read the papers with the rapidity of light, in a fraction of the time necessary to write it, and, having finished it, raised his eyes to those of Glenville.

## CHAPTER XXII.

THE dyed face of the guilty reader had grown pale and red by turns as his eyes flashed over the writing. Glenville had never seen Kingston Boyne tremble in all his life, and he and Kingston had faced death a thousand times.

But Kingston Boyne, or Miles Sherlock, as we will continue to call him, did tremble as he read the clear, bold writing of Clarence Parmond; the son, as Glenville had stated, of Carlo di Magnasco, that is, of Harry Freeland. Yes, the legitimate son of Harry Freeland, who had no more idea that Clarence Parmond was his son, than Miles Sherlock had that Roulette was his, Sherlock's daughter.

Sherlock, pale and trembling, gazed steadily at Glenville for a moment, and then asked:

"Where is Clarence Parmond?"

"What if I were to say that he is dead?" replied Glenville, in a whisper, and undoubtedly shrinking from the anticipated effect of his words.

"I will pay you one half of all the gold and bullion I expected to have safely stowed in the cabin of the Gretna, if you will show me his corpse," replied Sherlock. "That is," he added, with a suspicious look, "if no one but you has read this writing."

"I cannot say that," said Glenville, shrinking from the murderous glance in Sherlock's eye. "Perhaps it would cost me my life to say that I alone have read it. But I think I can very soon show you the corpse of Clarence Parmond."

"You have been deceiving me again, Jacob. You have attempted to play your cards against mine, and perhaps you might have won the game, if you had not discovered that you and I were burning candles over a barrel of gunpowder. But tell all, and I will forgive your intended treachery, if you prove that no one except you has read this, and that its author is dead. How came it into your possession, and when?"

"Listen. Three days ago, or a little more now, my agents seized Clarence Parmond—I have your promise, sir, to forgive all?"

"I have said that I will forgive you, if you prove



two things. First, that no eyes except yours and mine, and its writer's, have read this writing. Second, that Clarence Parmond is dead. I promise more, Jacob Almonda," added Sherlock; as he locked the two doors of the apartment, and again laid his hands upon his pistols. "I promise more. I promise that if you do not prove both, you will never leave this room alive."

"I fear the game is up with both of us, Kingston," replied Glenville, with the cold apathy of despair. "If I prove it you may kill me, and if I don't you will. If I mistake not, we are both ruined—you as well as Jacob Almonda. But listen. You as well as I know that Hermione is not my daughter. You wished to make her your wife, to gain possession of the property of which she is heiress. So did I. There is confession number one."

"That is not new to me, Jacob," replied Sherlock, calmly. "I knew your aspirations long ago, before you dared breathe them even to yourself. I suspected your hopes, even while you placed the little girl, the handsome heiress, in that prison of a boarding-school in France. Did I not force you, even then, to say that you were her father; and having once so stated, were you not compelled to keep up the falsehood?"

"Wretch!" thought Glenville. "I have suspected that lately. I was a fool not to remember that you lay your plans twenty years ahead. But only the evil one himself can play at any game with Kingston Boyle."

"Go on, Jacob. Time flies fast, and I have work to do before dawn, and may have much more to do than I imagined before I read this."

"Very well, sir. I desired to become the master of those estates, lying there without an owner, because it is believed that the rightful owner lives. You threatened to deprive me of the wealth I enjoy."

"Enjoy?" asked Sherlock, with a sneer of contempt.

"Well, I can't say that I have had much enjoyment of it," replied Jacob, "for somehow I always feared that the heir of young and old Carlo di Magnasco would turn up."

"You mean the son of young Carlo, whose wife, Sophrenia, I robbed him of, and who gave birth to the child of Carlo in Spain. You mean the child of the maniac mother, do you not?"

"I mean Clarence Parmond, the son of the unlucky man you had condemned for a deed you did yourself, sir, if I may be so bold."

"Oh, you may be as bold as you please, Jacob. You mean the grandson of the gentleman you murdered in London—the grandson of Charles Allison. I thought perhaps you feared young Carlo di Magnasco himself, the father of this Clarence Parmond, might, as you express it, turn up."

"He is dead, of course; isn't he, Kingston?" asked Glenville, turning pale and staring wildly.

"No. He is alive and in excellent health, or was a few hours ago. But go on. We may speak of him again. He was a good card in my game, Jacob, to trump your last trick if you played foul. Go on."

Glenville helped himself liberally to the brandy before he continued.

He had believed for years that the son of the man he had murdered—for he had murdered Charles Allison, the father of Freeland—was dead. He was almost ready now to believe that he had not murdered Charles Allison, the Englishman who had changed his name to marry a beautiful Italian lady—as Freeland had related to Roulette.

"I said I never enjoyed the wealth much, though it seemed for ever mine," he resumed. "And it happened just as I feared. You suddenly rise up in my path, after letting me shift for myself for I don't know how many years; and just as I was planning how to prove to Hermione that I was not her father, without letting her know who she was, you demand her of me for your wife."

"Very true, Jacob. My eyes were ever watching you; and when, four years ago, you took Hermione from the school and located in London, I followed you. I was right."

"Yes, the evil one always told you exactly what to do," thought Glenville, though he was far too prudent to say so.

"You demanded her hand, sir, and threatened to produce the true owner of the Allison estates in England. I did not believe you could do so until you proved to me that this young man, Clarence Parmond, was undoubtedly the grandson of Charles Allison. Then I hated him."

"And me, too, no doubt," said Sherlock.

"I have found it rather dangerous to say so, sir, and quite useless," replied Glenville, sullenly, while Sherlock's white teeth glittered in a sorrowful smile through his black-dyed beard. "I hated Clarence Parmond, and I tried to get him to go as supercargo,

but he refused. If he had gone, he'd have been at the bottom of the sea months ago."

"Then, you thought, you could defy me, Jacob. But even had you sent Clarence Parmond to the bottom of the sea, I could have produced—his father."

"I did not suspect that, sir," continued Glenville, and not inclined to believe the speaker. "Well, Parmond refused my offer with undignified disgust, and at once forbade my ever again speaking with him upon that or any other subject. Of course I hated him all the more, and finally I resolved to make an end of him, and risk your detection of my agency in the matter. But I went to work very cautiously, I assure you, and I don't think you ever could have found out that I had any hand in the matter. Of course I knew you would suspect, but you could not have proved it."

"Perhaps not. But go on."

"Three days ago one of my vessels sailed from Liverpool for the coast of Africa—"

"Ah! Then you kidnapped the man, and sent him to the bottom of the sea?" asked Sherlock.

"Wait, sir. I did better than that," said Glenville.

"Parmond did not go with that vessel—the Juno. But my three agents, fellows whom you never saw, three rascally Spaniards, strangers in the town—they did; and it is very probable that by this time all three have fed the sharks of the Gulf, for I took good care that they should have no chance to peach on me."

"I engaged the three to do what I wanted them to do, and when they had done it I saw them aboard the Juno; they were new hands. I hinted to my old Portuguese captain, Lopez, that the three had received a large sum in gold for a piece of rascality, and that he could gain all they had, and as much more, by losing them overboard before he doubled Cape Florida. Old Lopez grinned, and that sealed the fate of my three Spaniards. Now, had I merely shipped Parmond on board the Juno, he might have escaped—"

"You are tedious, Jacob. Where is Parmond, or what your three Spaniards left of him?"

"He is snugly sealed up in one of the vaults of the cemetery," whispered Glenville.

"Go on. Tell me how it was done," said Sherlock, with a sigh of relief.

"In the papers, sir, Parmond states that he suspects he is dogged by suspicious characters. He was, but not by any members of the bands, as he feared. I was after him, and had been for several days. We caught him at last, just after midnight, not far from his marble-yard. No doubt he was on his way at the time to place the papers in the keeping of some trusted friend, prior to pursuing his investigations. He knew, or suspected, that he was being watched, for he was very shy as he turned corners and passed alleys. But my men were too sharp for him, and as the Juno was to sail at daylight I told them to run some risk, rather than let him give them the slip. They met him near the marble-yard, where he least expected to be attacked, and as one accosted him the others passed a pace beyond him, and gave him a couple of telling raps on the head. He fell senseless, or dead, and I ran up and gave him a third blow to make sure—you see we would not use a knife, lest blood should be left upon the pavement. I wanted him to disappear and no one to suspect that he had been killed."

Glenville rattled off this barefaced recital of his infamous crime with a carelessness which proved his familiarity with deeds of blood and violence. Sherlock listened with a coolness that proved his cold and callous nature.

"The next thing was to dispose of the body," continued Glenville. "And for that I was prepared. It was a very dark and rainy night, as it has been for a week, and the Spaniards carried the body very easily. We met one or two policemen, but they no doubt supposed we were carrying a drunken man, for our language was to that effect, and they did not so much as accost us. We went straight to one of the gates of the cemetery. The gate was locked, of course, but I had prepared for that, and having a duplicate key, unlocked it and carried the body in. I had seen to every necessary arrangement about the vault, and we soon had that all right. One of the Spaniards first crawled into the vault, then dragged the body in feet foremost, the others helping him. Mortar, trowels, bricks, and marble slab were all there, for I had had them placed in the mouth of the vault a few days before. So we bricked and mortared him up, and sealed in the marble slab, and left him. That's what has become of Clarence Parmond, and now that you have read his papers, I am very sure that you are very glad he is where he is."

"But you have not told me how the papers fell into your hands."

"Oh, by simply falling from his pocket as we raised him into the vault," replied Glenville. "I put it into my own pocket, thinking it was nothing more

than one of those cylindrical tin boxes in which draughtsmen often carry their plans and sketches. I never looked into the box until I had bolted myself up in my own room, after I had visited the Forettis and seen that Arabian. I happened to see the box lying where I had thrown it into a drawer three days ago, and mechanically opened it. As soon as I had read it I thought it best to hasten to you and tell you all."

"You are sure, then, that Clarence Parmond was dead when you put him into the vault?"

"If he wasn't, he is now," replied Glenville, brutally. "But I am sure he was dead. Now what are we to do? Hermione has escaped. Perhaps she has heard enough of our secrets to put us in prison, if no more. The most bitter enemy you have on earth, Ibrahim, is in the town. If, as is proved, Parmond has discovered so much, why may not others have done the same?"

"It is scarcely probable that others have," replied Sherlock, boldly. "Parmond regarded me as a rival, and therefore sought to find something to attack. Chance placed the sheet of hieroglyphics in his possession. It was very foolish in me to trust my thoughts upon paper, even in characters known only to myself. I remember very well how the sheet slipped from my hands. I had been inventing that very style of cipher-writing, and what I wrote on the sheet was done to practise hand and eye. I held it flat against the wall above the mantelpiece, while I wrote upon it with a pencil. Somehow the sheet slipped from under my thumb and vanished into a crack, a mere crevice between the wall and the mantelpiece. I struck the mantelpiece smartly several times to dislodge it, so that it might fall clear through to the fireplace, but I could not stir it. So I left it, not imagining there was any chance of its ever being seen, unless the whole mantelpiece should be torn loose. I remember, too, that some repairs were needed in one of the rooms below—one of those now used by me when I appear as 'Giles'—and that I sent an order to the marble-yard—or rather I wrote the order, and you gave it to Ralph, telling him to take it to any marble-dealer he liked. I also told him which room needed the repairs."

"You see," said Glenville, "it was fatality—and it is my opinion that we had best put miles between us, as fast as the evil one will let us."

"Is not the Gretna ready to sail?"

"Yes, sir, at a moment's warning. I was afraid of her yesterday."

"Then why not wait twenty-four hours and carry out my plans? You can easily realize a fair price for your houses; so can I. The bands are in excellent discipline, and all is ready to give the signal. The plot is ripe. If you or I were suspected by the mayor, the chief of police, or any of the officials, I should have discovered it."

"But Hermione."

"Is she not with those mysterious fellows, the Forettis? No doubt she will remain there as long as she is unmolested. Let her remain there until to-morrow night—or rather, as it is now past midnight, let her remain fifteen hours, say. When the plot strikes, I will see to it that she is carried aboard of the Gretna. As for the Arabian, I will attend to him."

At this moment there was a peculiar rap at the door, recognized by Sherlock as a signal from Ralph.

Sherlock opened the door partially, and Ralph gave him a note, saying:

"A woman in black left it with the porter at the rear entrance, sir, saying that it must be delivered immediately."

Sherlock glanced at it, and the vigilant Glenville observed that he started slightly.

"Leave the room, Ralph," said Sherlock, curtly; and then turning to Glenville he tossed the note upon the table, saying:

"Read that."

"Hermione is now on her way to seek refuge with Roulette Freeland," read Glenville aloud.

"The deuce!" he exclaimed. "It will be no difficult matter to carry her off from there."

"You forget the blacksmith."

"The blacksmith? He is but one man," said Glenville. "But who wrote this?"

"I would give much to know," replied Sherlock.

"I will know before to-morrow, or sooner, for I have given orders to several of the keenest members of the bands to capture her."

His mind was by no means as easy as his words would seem to intimate. He had not forgotten that this mysterious woman also knew that Miles Sherlock was the disguised associate of thieves and outlaws. It was more than probable that she, as well as Clarence Parmond, had detected: he grand object of the perfect organization of the bands.

Still he reasoned that it was also very probable that she had only discovered his disguise, and that he wielded great and secret power over the police

and those whom they were sworn to arrest. He had already taken active measures for the capture of "the Woman in Black," and it was hardly possible that she could evade the hundreds of cunning men who had already, since his first meeting with her, been warned that a female spy was abroad.

"She is a spiteful creature, whoever she may be," said Sherlock, aloud.

"There is something in the flourish of the 'H' and 'F,'" remarked Glenville, as he eyed the note, "which I do not like."

"Ah, do you recognize anything familiar in the writing?" said Sherlock, quickly. "I have been so much occupied in thinking of other things that I have not thought of studying the hand closely. I have received four or five letters and notes, all in different hands—three of them, I know, from the same person. Let me examine the H and F, while you look at this slip of paper which I received to-night, not an hour ago, hardly."

He tossed the note which had been given to him by his driver to Glenville.

Both bent their scrutiny keenly upon what was before them, and Glenville first broke the momentary silence, by asking:

"Who is this of whom the note speaks?"

"Harry Freeland, the blacksmith."

"Ah! Then you have had your eye on the beautiful Rouletta? I have never seen her, though I have often heard Hermione speak of her. But what kind of a man is Harry Freeland?"

"A very dangerous man to you, if he has recognized Carol Glenville as Jacob Atmounds."

"I do not understand," said Glenville, surprised, and raising his eyes from the note before him.

There was much in the tone of Sherlock which sounded like a threat, or a note of serious warning, and Glenville's nerves were already in a state of painful excitement.

"He calls himself Harry Freeland," replied Sherlock, "but you murdered his father and son. Harry Freeland was Carlo di Magnasco."

"Great heaven! You are jesting!"

"I am telling the truth," replied Sherlock, calmly. "It is coming! It is coming! The game is up," cried Glenville, with his former trepidation. "It is fate. Has he recognized you?"

"No. But he hates me because he fears I intend to rob him of his daughter. There is something in her face and voice which reminds me of a woman I did devotedly love for a time," said Sherlock.

"Of a woman he did devotedly love for a time," thought Glenville. "No doubt he devotedly loved for a thousand times, and perhaps the writer of this note was one of them. Eh!" he exclaimed, as Sherlock struck the table fiercely, and uttered a loud oath.

"Curses upon her!" said Sherlock, glaring at the note in his hand. "I have discovered the serpent at last. I thought she was dead—I wish she was."

He began to pace the room in great agitation. Glenville thought he had never before seen him so disturbed.

"He is positively alarmed," thought Glenville, staring at him. "Some old love scrape has suddenly flown in his face. I have often told him some of his victims would not rest until they had tripped him up."

Miles Sherlock was certainly greatly excited, for not only did he pace the room rapidly, to and fro, but he muttered fierce and incoherent maledictions.

"I am very glad that he is not cursing me," thought Glenville, as Sherlock paused and glared at him. "May I take the liberty, sir, to ask the name of the—the—serpent?"

"Of your brood, Jacob! of your brood," replied Sherlock. "The serpent is—Judith!"

"Heaven save us!" cried Glenville, springing to his feet and glaring wildly about him.

(To be continued.)

SOME excitement is announced to have arisen in Sweden in consequence of the Russian Government having opened negotiations for the acquisition of a Norwegian port, where, by reason of the action of the Gulf Stream, the sea never freezes.

**DEATH OF MR. BALFOUR HAY OF LEYS.**—We have to announce the death of David Balfour Hay of Leys and Randerston, at the advanced age of eighty-eight. In early life he entered the army, and served under the late Duke of York. He was wounded in an engagement in Holland, and only saved by being carried off the field of battle by his servant, who came home with him and continued in his service. His remains were laid in the family vault under Newburgh Church beside those of his only brother, Captain Peter Hay, who also entered the army, and served in the 18th Light Dragoons in the Peninsular War, and went through the hardships and perils of the retreat from Corunna under Sir

John Moore, and had the reputation of being a brilliant and active officer. The deceased David Balfour Hay was the last male representative of an illustrious race. His unbroken descent through the male line for twenty-one generations, possessors of the original ancestral property, is almost without a parallel in family history.

## SCIENCE.

On the 30th January last a remarkable shower of meteorites fell at Siedce and Gostkow, near Pul-tusk, in Poland. Several are now in the British Museum. Externally they are covered with a dull dark-coloured crust, whilst internally they exhibit a bluish-gray colour, somewhat resembling the well-known meteorites of L'Aigle, in France.

**ANOTHER NEW PLANET.**—Professor Peters, of Litchfield Observatory, Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y., in a letter dated August 24, states that a new planet of the group of the asteroid was discovered by him on Saturday night, and its position and motion verified by him on the following Monday morning. It is in the constellation Pisces, and had at three o'clock in the morning 18 degrees 33 minutes of right ascension, and 12 degrees 54 minutes declination, moving slowly to the east. It is now equal to a star of about the eleventh magnitude.

The construction of an underground railway in Paris, more with the view of bringing in market produce from the suburbs than for the purposes of passenger traffic, has been decided upon. It is to start from the Halles Centrales at the extreme end of the Rue St. Honoré and take the line of the quays as far as St. Cloud, whence it will proceed to La Marche, famous for its steeples, where an immense station is to be constructed, which will form the starting point of a new circular railway passing entirely round Paris at several miles distance. The works are to be commenced on the Champs Elysées, between the Palais de l'Industrie and the Place de la Concorde.

**WALKING ON THE SEA.**—An American, named Stoner, dressed in an aquatic costume of his own invention, and accompanied by a friend similarly attired, jumped into the sea from a steamer, at Havre, and moved about in the water in an erect attitude, the water only up to the breast. He and his friend ate and drank provisions which they had taken with them in a tin box, they fired off pistols, hoisted a flag upon the box, lay down upon the water, and performed various other feats, apparently as much at their ease as if they had been on dry land. After an hour Mr. Stoner's companion left the water, the motion of waves having made him feel rather sea-sick. Mr. Stoner remained longer, and went out a long way to sea. When he returned on board he took off his sea-going costume and the sandals, loaded with lead, which kept him in a vertical position in the water, and appeared in his usual dress, which had not been in the least degree wetted.

**NEW METHOD OF SIGNALLING AT SEA.**—The invention of Mr. George Read, R.N., for signalling vessels at sea, which is highly approved by Captain Mends, R.N., and other well-known nautical authorities, was recently exhibited and explained in Liverpool, under the auspices of the Mercantile Marine Service Association. The leading feature of the plan is the connexion of the port and star-board lights with the steering apparatus; by means of an endless rope, the course which a vessel is taking is at once and unerringly indicated. All speculation as to which side one ship will pass another is at an end, and should a collision take place between vessels with such an apparatus on board, the party upon whom the blame rests is at once discovered. Thus a great deal of the hard swearing which now takes place in Admiralty courts may be avoided, while, by diminishing the chance of collision at all, the apparatus may be most valuable in creating an additional security to life and property.

**NICE OBSERVATIONS FROM A BALLOON.**—In a communication addressed to the Academy of Sciences, M. Flammarion gives an account of the phenomena he observed during a late scientific ascent in an air balloon. As regards sound, he states that its intensity is propagated to a considerable height in the atmosphere. Thus, he heard the whistle of a steam-engine at an altitude of 3,000 metres; the noise of a railway train passing, at 2,500 metres; the barking of dogs, at 1,800 metres; the report of a gun, the same; the cries of a large crowd, the crowing of cocks, and the noise of bells at 1,600 metres; the sound of drums and the music of an orchestra at 1,400 metres; the rumbling of carriages on a stone pavement at 1,200 metres; the human voice at 1,000 metres (5-8ths of a mile); the

croaking of frogs at 900; and the chirping of a cricket at 800 metres. It is not so in the case of a descending sound; for the voice of the astronaut at an altitude of 100 metres cannot make itself heard distinctly. The clouds offer no impediment to an ascending sound. The average velocity per second in the latter case is about 340 metres. The quiet waters of a lake echo the sound best upwards. While the balloon moves in obedience to the current, its shadow sweeps either the earth or the clouds. It is generally black, but it sometimes happens that, falling upon a darker spot than itself on the country, it assumes rather a luminous appearance. In this case, examined through a telescope, it is found to consist of a dark central nucleus surrounded by luminous penumbra. On the green trees of a forest it appears yellow. On the clouds, when they are white, and at the moment of issuing again into the pure sky with the sun shining, the air balloon is minutely depicted with all its details, and of a grayish hue. When it has reached an altitude of 3,000 metres, the sky appears dark and impenetrable, in proportion as there is a diminution of moisture. The light of the rising sun appears to penetrate through every terrestrial object, while that of the moon, which is always red, seems only to glide over them.

## NEW FRENCH-RIVER STEAMERS.

UNDER this title an account of the loss of the *Gironde*, a vessel of extraordinary dimensions, has lately appeared in the London papers. It was first published in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* of the 5th August. The *Gironde*, which is described as a strange-looking craft—a cross between a green lizard and a sea serpent—remained at Gibraltar during the months of May and June. She was so long, so narrow, and so low in the water that it seemed a miracle how she got there. She underwent thorough repair at Gibraltar, and then left for Cadiz, Lisbon, and Vigo. She left Gibraltar on the 11th July and reached Cadiz on the following day, and Lisbon shortly afterwards. A week afterwards she left, with fine weather, for Vigo, but shortly after leaving the Tagus she encountered a fresh breeze from the south-west, which caused her to strain terribly, and finally she broke amidships, the fore-part rising and the after-part sinking immediately with the captain and eight of the crew out of thirteen. Fortunately a Spanish fishing-boat was in sight, and the whole of the fourteen souls aboard were saved.

We have taken the trouble to inquire about these long boats, and have been favoured by their proprietor, M. Jaille, of Agen, with the following particulars:—Two boats, the *Ville d'Agen* and the *Lot et Garonne*, are employed as passenger boats between Agen and Bordeaux. They are mixed steamers, and are identical in every respect:—Total length, 294 ft. 9 in.; breadth of beam, 18 ft. 4 in.; draught, when unloaded, but with fifteen tons of coal on board, and boilers filled, just over 2 ft. 1 in.; nominal power of engines, 250-horse power; maximum capacity, 120 tons; maximum number of passengers carried by each boat, 800.

The unfortunate *Gironde*, lost off the coast of Portugal, was rather smaller than the above twin vessels. Her dimensions and capacity were as follows:—Total length, 252 ft.; breadth of beam, 18 ft. 10 in.; draught of water, 2 ft. 4 in.; maximum load, 80 tons; two engines, each of 100-horse power. It will be perceived that the twin vessels, although more than 42 ft. longer than the *Gironde*, have 6 in. less breadth of beam than that vessel. M. Jaille evidently finds this form of vessel suitable for the passenger traffic on the Garonne, for he is now building a third to replace the *Gironde*.

**AMERICAN ANTIQUITIES.**—We are told of some discoveries recently made by railway surveyors on the banks of the Little Colorado river, in the territory of Arizona; walls of buildings still 8 ft. or 9 ft. high, irrigating canals, and the ruins of a castle, of which the walls are still 30 ft. high. The ruined buildings are of hewn stone. A paper recently read at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, held in Chicago, on the "Geological Evidence of Man's Antiquity in the United States," maintained that four American races preceded the red man; first, the mound-builders; second, a race in the territory now called Wisconsin; third, a warlike race in the region south of Lakes Ontario and Erie; and, fourth, a religious people in Mexico. Pottery, arrow-heads, &c., have been found, the writer said, in conjunction with and beneath the mastodon and megatherium. While Dr. Hooker has been drawing public attention to a race who erect dolmens, &c., in India, Mr. Squiers has been photographing ancient dolmens in Peru! The sitting posture in which the dead were anciently placed in Mexico and elsewhere in America, too, is interesting in connexion with the ancient "old world" races who also buried their dead in a sitting posture.





[A DISCOVERY.]

## TWO LOVES FOR ONE HEART.

THE labour of the day was over, the cattle safely housed, and Silas Brooke paused for a moment on the brow of the little ascent on which Interval Farmhouse and its comfortable outbuildings were clustered.

He removed his old straw hat to let the evening air cool his hot forehead. It was late in June, and the heat that day had been oppressively sultry. The sun, in bannered clouds of purple and crimson, making the sky look all aflame, was sinking behind the Green Mountains, and all nature wore an air of quiet and serenity.

Silas Brooke drank in the lovely scene with great enjoyment; though every hill and dale, meadow and wood, running brooklet, pasture, and tilled arable land, orchard and garden, had been familiar to his sight from childhood, he found new delight each day in gazing upon them, and it seemed, to his untutored mind, as if the broad expanse of earth could not contain a spot transcending this in loveliness. Nor was he alone in this opinion; the romantic banks of the winding Assabet—for the river had retained the name given to it by the red children of the forest in the olden time—had already attracted many summer tourists.

For years he had tilled these fruitful acres, and, though they were not his, he had come to look upon them almost as a part of himself. Nor did he check this feeling, for, after what the farmer had settled for him, the day was to come when all would be his. He was neither covetous nor selfish, he was merely inspired with the deep satisfaction of a hard worker, who has faithfully performed his task, when he gazed on the teeming fields, and thrifty orchards of the broad interval, and thought how much his care had done to encourage its bloom and fruitfulness.

Thus it was, that pausing every evening after the day's labour, he used to stop and take a survey of the lovely prospect, bathing his soul, as it were, in the beauty of the scene. He was no dreamer; he did not lose himself in speculative theories, or sigh for some imaginary good beyond his sphere of life.

The world was to him a stern reality of daily toil, sweetened by the balmy rest that followed each day's labour. He had accepted his destiny without a sigh—he had no aspirations beyond his present life. He was content and happy—vigorous with health and strength—happy as the birds that carolled joyously around him while he toiled.

He was scarcely the man one would have selected for a hero, with his brown face, his rough and horny hands, and his coarse attire; yet there was a charm in the square, honest face, the crispy brown locks, the smile that hovered around the firmly-cut lips and the dark gray eyes, that sent forth such glimpses of the frank soul within. A commonplace farmer, nothing more; but, meeting that clear face, that had never worn a mask, after one good look in the earnest eyes, you would have said:

"This man can be trusted."

Old Farmer Mayfern had thought so years ago, and after a long trial he had seen no occasion to change his opinion. He treated him as if he were his own son, and loved him almost as well as he did his only child, the solace of his widowed heart, his pet, his darling, pretty little Rose.

Standing in the porch of the old farmhouse, with an open letter in his hand, he waited the approach of Silas Brooke, a look of fond affection and pious intelligence on his withered features.

"Hi! my boy!" he cried, as Silas lingered in the contemplation we have described. "Come! Why, how slow you are this evening."

The old man was evidently full of some joyous in-

telligence which he was impatient to communicate. Silas hastened his steps at the summons, and soon reached his side.

"She's coming! She's coming!" cried Farmer Mayfern, in great glee. "Coming home for good—will be here to-morrow, by the first train—coming for good, thoroughly restored in health—isn't that great news?"

"Rose?" asked Silas, quietly, though his heart began to beat tumultuously, and his eyes glistened.

"Yes, here is her letter. It came this afternoon while you were in the field. Johnson's boy brought it over. See what she says."

He handed it to Silas, who took it gently in his strong, brown hand, as if it were something sacred and to be used with exceeding kindness. He was all of a quiver, and the delicate letters he knew so well, danced before his eyes so that he could scarcely make them out. He merely made a pretence of reading it, and then returned it. She was coming back—that was enough for him. The intelligence thrilled him to the soul.

"Great news, indeed," he said, trying to steady his voice and speak calmly. "The old farm has scarcely been itself during Rose's absence."

"Ah! my boy," returned the farmer, "you haven't missed her as I have. Three years is a long time in an old man's life. When we are on the wrong side of the hill and going down into the vale, the hours are more precious to us, and we begin to husband time. Speaking of husbanding, reminds me of something else, my boy. Eh! eh! Why you are blushing like a girl of seventeen. Hold up your head and be a man! There's nothing so dreadful in marrying a girl like Rose, I can tell you. Ah! what a beauty her dear, dead and gone mother was! and Rose is like her so much. Well—well, we won't talk about that—it's a mournful subject at the best; and we must be merry, for Rose is coming home! We'll have the wedding in a fortnight from to-day, my boy, and then you will be in reality what I have so long considered you, my son. Ah! it will be a happy day for me when I see the two objects of my fondest love united. Why, we shall be the snugest family in the whole town. But come in, the tea's on the table, and Hetty will scold us if we keep her waiting much longer."

They entered the house, and went into the neat little sitting-room together, which was presided over by a sharp-eyed girl of small figure, but very energetic in appearance.

Her form, though *petite*, was well developed, and her rounded limbs were full of a healthy, vigorous grace. She had hair of the most intense blackness, smoothed back from her narrow forehead in plain, glossy bands. Her eyes were like little sparkling jets of anthracite coal, and scintillated with a restless, snapping motion. Her nose was long and straight, her mouth was small, and the ruby lips made to resemble a half-opened rosebud.

There was a look of premature wisdom—a kind of oldishness, if one might use the expression, for want of a better term, out of keeping with her years, and a little touch of vinegar in her face, that marred its perfect symmetry.

On the whole she was a tolerably good-looking girl; few, however, called her handsome; "smart" was the word applied to Hetty Waters. She held the position of housekeeper and maid-of-all-work at the farmhouse, and well she performed her duties. They were not very hard, however, as none of the labourers were boarded at the house, a building erected for the purpose being arranged for them, at the other end of the farm.

Farmer Mayfern was rather fond of keeping his home select, and his daughter, Rose, had encouraged that feeling to a considerable extent. So Hetty had only Mayfern's small family, Silas counted as one, to minister to.

She had found Silas already established there when she came, and the similarity of their situation had drawn her towards him in sympathy from the first.

They were both orphans, both found a home beneath Farmer Mayfern's hospitable roof. She a child of seven, he a lad of ten. Never was bounty so well rewarded as in their case.

The boy grew up to be a good farmer and a most energetic overseer, and the girl a prudent and thrifty housekeeper. Originally engaged to take charge of little Rose, then but two years of age, she had gradually obtained the full sway of the little household, and Mrs. Mayfern's death placed her in entire charge.

From the first, even when they were children together, she had looked after Silas's welfare with almost a mother's solicitude. She had mended his clothes, washed and ironed his handkerchiefs, and "done for him" generally.

The waspish little girl had, as we have shown, blossomed into a tolerably good-looking woman, and

was not without her admirers. Many a sturdy young farmer sought to transfer this excellent housewife—for her virtues in that respect were well known—to his own domicile; but Hetty refused one and all, and remained most pertinaciously single, to the great surprise of everybody.

Whatever was her motive for adopting a life of single blessedness remained unsuspected; she kept her own counsel too well, and had too sharp a tongue for the inquisitive, to let her private affairs become known.

She was remarkably silent on this particular evening while she served the tea, and Mr. Mayfern and Silas partook of their supper and discoursed pleasantly of Rose's return; when the meal was over, and they retired to the porch, still discussing the same subject, she cleared away the things with spiteful little jerks, muttering to herself all the while:

"Coming home, is she?" she said. "Well, I am glad of that—heaven knows! I always did love her. But the idea of her marrying him. She's no more fit to be his wife than a Chinese mandarin. She's more like a doll than a woman—only fit to look nice, and wear good clothes. What kind of a wife is she for a stout, strong man like him? He wants somebody to help to work. I love her dearly—but I love him the best, and always did—and when two loves like that come together, it's enough to worry the heart right out of one's body!"

From this soliloquy the reader will surmise the cause of Hetty's refusal of the many good offers she had received.

Silas Brooke also had his thoughts bent on that memorable evening when alone in the solitude of his own chamber. Memory became busy, and travelled back over the events of the last fifteen years. He remembered well the day when his poor mother died—the only being he had to love in all the wide world: his little substance was quite exhausted in meeting her funeral expenses, and he was looking about for something to do, even then filled with a strong reliance on his own exertions; for from his birth toil had been his heritage, when Farmer Mayfern, pleased with his bright look and sturdy little form, had offered him a home at Interval Farm.

It seemed but yesterday when he, a bright-hearted, bare-footed boy, used to drive the cows to pasture, and weed the strawberry-beds; there was Rose, a little cherub with laughing blue eyes and golden hair, that he used to carry pig-a-back, and suffer to pull his hair with the most perfect equanimity. She was the nearest approach to an angel that he could imagine; and as she grew in years that feeling strengthened in his heart. It was his greatest joy to wait upon her, and she was a most exacting little mistress, for, with a child's intuitive perception, she knew her power over him.

Her slightest wish was his law, and he was never tired of ministering to her wildest caprices. He rode and sailed with her, gathered her the freshest fruits and flowers, led her to the places where the berries grew the thickest, plundered birds' nests at her bidding, and found the coolest shade on the days when the sunbeams descended hotly, and the air was sultry with the languid summer heat. It would be hard to say when he first began to love her; but when she stood upon the threshold of blooming womanhood, he felt his heart was in her keeping, and life would be a blank without her; and the great fear fell upon him that he had let his aspirations soar too high, that he was not worthy of her, and that she would never return his presumptuous passion.

At the very moment he gave himself up to despair, hope dawned upon him radiantly. Farmer Mayfern had watched the young couple for some time with earnest care.

Silas's love was but too apparent, and he thought Rose was not indifferent to him. Well pleased, he determined to make a match of it. None knew the sterling worth and goodness of Silas Brooke better than himself.

The boy had grown up under his own immediate eye, and his record was of the fairest. His skill and management had doubled the value of the farm, and the old man had dealt fairly with him. Since he had arrived at the age of eighteen, Silas had worked the farm on shares, and had a nice little sum put by in the bank.

Where could he find a better husband for his treasured daughter? She might find a richer suitor, it is true; but he wanted a man, in the highest sense of the word, not a money-bag.

When Silas was twenty-two and Rose seventeen, he had broached the subject to them. He began with Silas, and the young man's surprise and joyful consternation were almost ludicrous to behold.

"Do you think she will be willing?" he gasped.

"Why not?" asked Mayfern. "She appears to be very fond of you."

"Fond of me—yes; but fondness is not love, you know? She may merely regard me as a brother; and, somehow, it has always appeared to me that I am not good enough for her."

"Nonsense! you are too modest. An honest man is good enough for a queen. Tell her you love her, the first chance you get, ask her to marry you, and see what she says."

Silas promised to do so; but he inwardly resolved that if rejected he would leave the farm and try his fortune elsewhere. He could not dwell in her presence with that great love in his heart unrequited. Mr. Mayfern smoothed the way for him by breaking the ice with Rose.

"My darling," he said, "it's about time you thought of getting married."

She looked at him in open-eyed wonder. "Whatever put that into your head?" she cried. "I have been thinking of it for the last few days. I should like to see you settled for life—and I have found a good husband for you."

"Dear me!" she laughed, shaking her sunny curls roguishly; "and who is it, pray?"

"Silas Brooke."

"Silas Brooke," she answered, looking both amused and astonished. "What honest, bashful Silas, who is like my shadow, fetches and carries for me, like a faithful dog? He is the last man I should have thought of for a husband."

"Why, don't you love him?" cried her father, a little disappointed by her words.

"I don't know what love is," answered the girl, ingenuously. "I certainly am very fond of him—like him better than anyone I know, except yourself, dear father—and perhaps that is love. I know that he is devoted to me, obeys my slightest wish, would give his life to save me from a moment's pain. I have long perceived this, and, somehow, I feel as if I could never give him an affection worthy of his devoted love."

"Give him yourself," cried the matter-of-fact farmer, who had outgrown all his romance, "and, my life on it, he will be satisfied."

"Oh, that is easily done," smiled Rose, amused at her father's eagerness. "You seem to wish it. I know Silas is a great favourite with you."

"I do wish it, my child," returned the farmer, seriously. "I love Silas like a son. I would like him to have the farm when I am gone, and if you marry him, why everything can be arranged according to my wishes."

"Then I will marry him, father," replied Rose; "for I see that it will make you happy, and him also, and if I don't love him quite as well as he deserves, I don't love anybody else; and I suppose I shall love him better as I grow older."

So the affair was settled, and Rose and Silas were engaged. Hetty broke more dishes on that day than she had during all her service. She walked about like one in a dream, and everything seemed to slip through her fingers; but Hetty was subject to odd fits, and nobody minded her.

Farmer Mayfern was anxious to have the marriage over as quickly as possible, with due regard to preparations; but a sudden and alarming obstacle presented itself. Rose was seized with hemorrhage of the lungs, one day, after some violent exercise, and Silas went in great haste for the old family doctor.

Rose had been carried upstairs to her chamber, very pale and weak. The old doctor shook his head gravely, as he looked at her. He was obliged to confirm Mayfern's fears. Rose's mother had died of consumption—that terrible scourge of our northern clime—and the seeds of the insidious disease were implanted in the daughter's frame.

"You must take her to the south," said Doctor Marvin. "She'll never live through the winter if you keep her here. Same symptoms as her mother—you remember how she was first taken?"

There was no more talk of marriage after that. It was three weeks before Rose was fully recovered, and she looked quite fragile still; but the touch of the destroyer's hand had tinted her face with a loveliness almost beyond earthly beauty. Silas realized how well he loved her, by the sharp agony that wrenched his heart, when death's pale shadow crossed the sunny pathway of his life. By the time she recovered, all had been arranged. Farmer Mayfern had betrothed him of his wife's sister, who had married, and gone to Florida. She had been very urgent to have Rose pass a winter with her, and had often written to that effect. Being of a consumptive tendency herself, she had often mentioned how much benefit she had derived from the climate there, and described that portion as being indeed a "land of flowers." Mayfern determined to accept this long-standing invitation. So when Rose was well enough to travel, after a most affectionate farewell with Silas, Rose promising to get well as soon as she could, so that she might come back and marry him, she set forth with her father.

Mayfern left her comfortably domiciled with her aunt, Mrs. Gallot, and returned home. The reason why he returned so soon, and without Rose, was, that he had been assured by Doctor Gallot—his wife's sister's husband, and a physician of great skill—that Rose's lungs were seriously affected, and in order to effect a permanent cure, it would be necessary to have her remain there two or three years.

Much as he dreaded the long separation, he thought it better to endure it than risk her loss by a too speedy return. Silas was of his opinion. Safe and happy in the thought that she was to be his, he could endure the probation without a murmur.

Rose corresponded regularly; one incident she mentioned alarmed them all very much, and filled Silas with a vague uneasiness. She had narrowly escaped death by drowning, while out with a pleasure party upon the bay.

She had been rescued, at the risk of his own life, by a young man called Percival Stanberry. She described him as a thorough gentleman, of wealthy connections, and a resident of England. He was attached to the corps of civil engineers that were then surveying the coast.

Silas thought she was enlogistic in the praise of this gentleman, and, considering the romantic nature of their first acquaintance, trembled for the consequences. What if a love for this stranger should usurp his place in her heart? He was keen-eyed enough to know that his passion had not awakened a true echo in her soul; the love she gave him was, at the best, but a quiet, friendly feeling, and he had sometimes thought that her gentle, easy nature was incapable of any great depth of love. However, as she never mentioned Percival Stanberry's name again in any of her letters, the feeling died away and was forgotten.

Now three years had passed away and Rose was coming home, thoroughly restored in health, and with no fears for the future. The world wore a glad smile to Silas Brooke's eyes, as he drove over to the station to meet the train. How eagerly he watched as the passengers alighted. He thought he should recognize her at the first glance, but he was mistaken. When an elegantly-dressed woman, with the air and bearing of a refined and accomplished lady, stepped upon the platform, and smilingly accosted him with:

"Well, here I am, Silas!" he could only gaze at her in blank astonishment.

"Don't you know me?" she asked, merrily, as her hand remained extended unshaken.

He roused himself with an effort, and mechanically grasped it. He was not only bewildered, but chilled by the change; and yet her greeting was warm and friendly, there was a pleasant smile in her full blue eyes, and the fair curls of golden hair clustered as of old around her white forehead. The change was in the face; the girlish bloom was gone, and woman was stamped upon every feature. She had grown more lovely; contact with polished society had toned her down, and given an intellectual cast to her classical features.

This change affected Silas strangely. It made him uneasy and thoughtful, and he did not derive the great joy from this reunion that he had anticipated; but then the reality always falls short of the expectation. He was not versed sufficiently in worldly experience, however, to console himself with this reflection. During the drive home, Rose, who was very vivacious, plied him with innumerable questions, which he answered, concealing his abstraction as best he could. She rattled on without noticing his absent mood. It almost appeared as if she talked incessantly, as if wishing to banish some unpleasant reflection from her thoughts.

Her father received her with unbounded delight, and Hetty's welcome was honest and sincere. It was not her fault if Silas loved her. Hetty was endowed with Spartan fortitude, and hid her griefs from all eyes. Whatever hidden pangs she suffered, the face gave no signs. Again the marriage was spoken of, and again the preparations were commenced. Silas, who noted with the keen eye of affection, saw that Rose was absent and ill at ease; yet she was as kindly affectionate as ever, and smiled upon him whenever he approached; but the end was fast approaching.

Two weeks after Rose's return home, one day, as he was taking a short cut to the house through the little grove, when he came suddenly upon Rose in earnest conversation with a stranger, a young man of fine appearance, and fashionably dressed, whom he had never seen in the town before. He paused involuntarily, surprised at this unexpected sight, standing among the trees unseen. The stranger appeared to be urging some request to which Rose would not listen. He took her hand, but she snatched it from his grasp, and turning, fled precipitately towards the house. Silas could put but one interpretation upon this scene—the stranger had offered her an insult. His eyes flashed, his broad chest heaved, and



he strode heavily into the little glade and confronted the stranger.

"What were you doing with that lady?" he demanded, sternly.

The stranger regarded him haughtily, by no means intimidated by the threatening expression upon his face. He was a handsome man, with a clear complexion, dark chestnut hair, and hazel eyes, tall in stature, and very gentlemanly in appearance.

"By what right do you ask?" he returned, coolly. Silas was a little bewildered by this counter-question.

"By the right of one who has been brought up under the same roof with her," he responded; "her playmate in childhood, her protector now—one who has the right of a—"

He hesitated, he could not say "lover," the word seemed to stick in his throat, so he substituted "brother," instead.

"Oh!" cried the stranger, pleasantly. "I see; you are the farmer's son. She has often spoken of you to me."

Silas looked surprised. "To you?" he said. "You are then—"

"Percival Stanberry," replied his companion, with a graceful bend of the head.

Silas shivered involuntarily; the old fear came back to his heart; conceit was not one of his foibles, and he felt how much he must suffer in a comparison with this elegant man.

"I have made a mistake here," he said, extending his hand. "Excuse me."

"Don't mention it," returned Percival, grasping the offered hand warmly. "I am glad to know you, sir."

Silas was at a loss to understand what could have been the nature of the scene between Percival and Rose, the abrupt termination of which he had witnessed. Percival seemed to read his thought, for he said:

"You are doubtless surprised at the strange manner in which your sister parted from me just now. It is easily explained. There was only a few days since that I learned of her sudden departure from Florida. I had looked forward to find her still there on my return. We were very intimate during her residence there, and I could not resist the impulse I had to call upon her at her home—to tell her that I loved her."

"You did not?" cried Silas, hoarsely.

"I most certainly did!"

"And she?"

He was giddy with excitement.

"Rejected me. Was grateful for the life I saved, but could not marry me."

Silas breathed easier, a load was taken from his heart. It was a strange confidence he was enjoying, and yet, how could he deceive this man, who took him for a brother, in the literal sense, and dreamed not of the true relation in which he stood to Rose?

"If it had only been that I mistook her feelings," continued Percival, making no effort to conceal his mortification, "and that she refused me, why, that would have been a shock; I could have endured it; but to be forbidden ever to see her again so disdainfully, even fiercely, as if the best homage of my heart were an insult to her. And yet, she once was so gentle, so fearful of giving pain. Is it possible that she can be so utterly transformed?"

Percival paused in deep reflection. Silas had not been deceived, then, in the change that had come over Rose, for this young man had observed it also. Percival had checked his words, not knowing to what extent he could trust Silas, still deeming him to be Rose's brother. Was it indeed disdain, he reflected, or was it misery, that he read in her face? What if there should be some dark mystery over her fate that she dared not even hint at? He would believe that—anything—rather than that she could be capricious and cruel.

"Do not think me presumptuous," he cried, suddenly; "but I dare to think that, after all, Rose loves me."

Silas started as if he had been stung.

"No, no, my dear fellow," he exclaimed, compassionately; "you must not think that—you must not, indeed."

"I will never breathe that hope without warrant to do so," continued Percival, persistently; "but still—"

"Why speak of it?" interrupted Silas—"surely Rose refused you?"

"Ay; but her agitation, her trembling form, her look of wretchedness, that I at first took for anger. What if there should be some mystery?"

"What mystery can there be?" asked Silas, in surprise and pity for the young man's infatuation.

"Fathers, before now, have forced children to marry against their will."

"Ah, that's not her case!" cried Silas, confidently.

"Or there have been," continued Percival, persistently following the train of his own reasoning, "have been such things as childish engagements—"

engagements made before the young heart knew what love meant, yet which a cruel, a false honour bound it to keep. Ah, that's a bitter wrong to both!"

"What has that to do with Rose?" asked Silas, a little sharply.

Somehow the other's words grated upon his mind. "I cannot say," answered Percival, communing more with his own thoughts than addressing Silas; "very likely nothing. She had lived long in the retirement of this country village; she told me that in Florida she first seemed to live. It is not only for myself I care. Put me out of the question; but some chance may bind her to one, who could not understand her refined, gentle nature—to one with whom she would suffer and die uncomplainingly."

Silas winced at these words.

"Silence, man!" he cried, harshly. "What do you take us for, us rough country folks? We may not know much of books; we may be out of place in parlours, with the sun's tan on our faces, and dust-stained boots; but when joy comes, when sorrow comes, we have hearts that bound or burst. We are men, with all our imperfections, in the eyes of our Creator!"

"You are right," returned Percival, apologetically. "I was selfish and unjust."

Silas did not heed him. The sting had reached his mind and left its venom there. What if he should seem a mere country clown to Rose, now that she had seen the world and mixed with fine people? Oh, no! it was impossible. He could not doubt the pure affection that looked through her innocent eyes. He really felt sorrow for this young man, who seemed to love her so well, and so uselessly.

"I tell you what, Mr. Stanberry," he cried, in his natural, cheery voice, "you must forget this folly. Work hard—root it out! Come back to us in a year or so. Who knows but Rose will be married then, and you will meet her as a friend—her husband's friend. We have plenty of good horses here, and we will give you a canter among our green hills, and by our winding river, and find you a cosy seat by the chimney nook in the cool autumn evenings. We shall be as merry as the day is long. Come, come, you'll soon forget her."

"If she forgets," answered Percival.

"If!"

Silas was again perplexed. This would-be rival—he doubted it. And how was it with Silas—did he doubt it, too? How, if it should be true? What had she told this man—that until she went to Florida she had never lived? What made her leave him so excitedly?

It could not have been hate. He was her dear friend—had preserved her life. If not hate, what was it then?

The inevitable question would intrude itself upon his mind. Suppose she had fallen in love with Percival, and felt bound by duty to Silas—that would explain all. It was a thought that burned and rankled in his heart, and when he strove to tear it out, uproot it, as he would a noxious weed, it only went deeper and deeper.

"I am sorry to part with you," said Percival, observing his companion's emotion, and mistaking it for sympathy for himself. "I shall leave the village by the next train."

"Stay," cried Silas, grasping him suddenly by the arm. "You said there was some mystery here. You shall not go until it is cleared up."

Percival looked surprised.

"I shall not shrink from any inquiry you may choose to make," he said. "I will even change my plans to accommodate you. I am stopping at Glendale House, where I will await your pleasure."

"Very well," returned Silas, and they separated, each glad to be alone with his own thoughts.

A mist was before Silas's eyes as he turned his steps towards the house—a mist that seemed to envelop earth and air, and every hope he had in life. His limbs were quivering, his gait unsteady—never in all his life had he felt such a dread agony as now convulsed his soul.

If it should be true—if Rose really loved this stranger, if he had won her heart away from him, he who loved her so fondly, who considered that all this world contained of good was centred in her. Oh, but it could not be.

Percival had deceived himself—lovers are so prone to believe all they wish. He would not be mastered by this torturing doubt. All would soon be well. He would look it in the face—he would see Rose—he would ascertain the truth, and if she had suffered her affection to stray away from him, why then—ah! what then?

Standing beneath the vine-covered porch, looking more like a spirit of beauty, in her white dress and her golden curls, than a weak, fragile woman, Rose beamed a welcome upon him as he approached. How his heart bounded at the sight of her.

"You must not stand here," he cried, with earnest solicitude. "There's a breeze rising, and you cannot be too careful, you know."

He led her in to the cosy little parlour, and placing her in a chair, wrapped a light shawl around her delicate shoulders. Mr. Mayfern was indulging in an afternoon nap, Hetty was busy in her kitchen—he could never find a better opportunity, for he was resolved to know the truth.

"Rose," he began, "I have something to say to you."

"Yes, Silas," she answered, quietly; but he saw that her face was quite pale, and the brightness of her eyes dimmed as if by recent weeping.

"There have been a good many changes since you left us," he continued. "You are changed a little yourself, Rose. The girl's look has gone from your face."

"Yes; I'm a woman now," she returned, dreamily.

"We are always changing, I suppose," he went on, steadying his voice by a strong effort. "Our childish sports do not amuse us now. Our tastes change; our likings change, as we grow older—it is what we must look for. You would not wonder then if I were changed, too?"

"You could never change from what you are—a good and honest man!" she cried, looking up in his face with an earnest gaze; but it seemed to Silas that the affection that prompted her was not the love a husband craves.

"Do you know," he resumed, still intent upon solving the mystery; "I have often thought of that story you once read to me, and which you were so fond of—about the young folks who were engaged to each other, like you and me."

Rose looked at him with startled eyes, and her whole frame quivered.

"What about them?" she asked, but her voice was as low as the gentle summer breeze.

Silas cleared his throat, for his voice had become quite husky.

"Well, you see," he continued; "they did not know their own minds until they were separated. Then they both found out that what they thought was love, was a mistake."

She was fluttering now like a frightened bird in its cage.

"Oh, Silas," she cried, tearfully. "What do you mean? Have pity on me—you do not know how much depends upon it. You do not—you cannot mean that you are changed to me?"

What was this agitation but fear? She dreaded it—why then she loved him still. But he wished to satisfy every doubt.

"Would you find it hard if I were changed to you?" he asked.

Her face flushed, and she turned away her head, as if anxious to hide the workings of her features.

"Yes," she answered, after a slight pause; "very hard, if you thought ill of me."

He was not exactly pleased with the answer.

"Would it cost you much to think that I was changed?" he persisted.

"I cannot bear this," she murmured, in deep emotion.

He smiled.

"You cannot bear to think so, is that it?" he said. She remained silent. "Nay, a word will do—a smile." Her face remained turned away from him.

He laid his hand gently upon her shoulder. "Rose," he continued, earnestly, "I have been honest with you all my life. Will you speak to me truly? What is it that you cannot bear?"

"To give you pain," she sighed. "I would rather die."

Percival Stanberry was right; there was some mystery here, and he was determined to unravel it, though the knowledge wrecked his peace and happiness for ever.

"Do you know anything, then," he urged, "that would give me pain if I knew it too?"

"Silas, Silas!" she cried, imploringly, turning her tearful eyes full upon him, "this is torture!"

"Be calm," he said, soothingly. "It is only a word, and it must come. When we two stand together in the church—when you take the vows that cannot be unsaid—the vows of love, of duty and faith, until death do us part!"

Before he could finish she was down upon her knees, grovelling at his feet.

"Spare me—spare me!" she exclaimed, in stifled tones, extending her clasped hands imploringly towards him. "I am very wretched!"

He staggered for a moment, like one who has received a sudden and severe blow, then he raised the weeping girl from the floor and gently replaced her in her chair.

"My poor Rose!" he gasped.

He could say no more.

Rose felt the necessity of an explanation, and she grew more composed as he remained silent.

"Silas, I must speak now," she began, hastily brushing away her tears. "When we were first engaged to each other I was so young—I had seen no one but you. I did not dream that there was another feeling, far different from a sister's love—one that is not merely affection, but part of one's self. And it came so unperceived; it dawned upon me so softly, rose so gradually that it was there, deep in my heart, quickening every pulse, mingling with every breath, steeping all life in brightness, before I knew its power, before I felt that when that light was blotted out the whole world would be darkness. Then came misery. I had not been willingly guilty, but the thought of your great goodness haunted me like a remorse. I strove to break the spell by returning home. But I could not fly from myself. And now, Silas, that you have made me see the truth, I must go on. In spite of all my efforts the fatal passion still conquers me. And oh, if I have sinned in yielding my love to another, I shrink from a sin yet darker: I cannot, dare not take a false vow to heaven, and betray the trust of your noble heart."

"You love this man—this Percival Stanberry?" he asked, hoarsely.

"Yes."

His dream of happiness was over; he could only murmur:

"Poor girl! poor girl!"

She looked timidly in his face; even she had not rightly judged that noble nature.

"What!" she cried in glad surprise, "can you forgive me?"

"Forgive you! Forgive you!" he answered, plaintively; and he bent over and imprinted a brother's kiss on her fair, white forehead. "I partly guessed it; you see, by my calmness, I was prepared for it." She knew not the struggle it cost him to appear so calm. "And you—can you bear a surprise?"

"What can I not bear, after this?" she murmured.

"Wait here a little while—I have a present for you," he said, with a smile. "I will soon be back."

He hurried from the house, leaving Rose very much astonished at his words, but very happy, withal. It would have been a keener pang to poor Silas's heart, had he known the joy her release from the engagement between them afforded her.

In a quarter of an hour he was back again, but not alone, a well-known form accompanied him. Her heart gave a great bound as she beheld Percival Stanberry.

"There," cried Silas, as he led the young man towards her, and placed his hand in hers, "there is the man you love, take him, and heaven bless you both!"

He left them alone together. Silas was not content with half measures. Whatever he did was done thoroughly and completely. He sought Farmer Mayfern, and informed him of the true state of affairs. The farmer was very much chagrined at the defeat of his pet scheme, and was even more disappointed—if it were possible—than Silas himself. Indeed he was disposed to frown down Percival's pretensions, and insist upon Rose marrying Silas, as had been agreed upon; but Silas would not listen to such a proceeding.

He told the farmer that Rose would break her heart if she were separated from the man she loved, and they would be guilty of her death. That was an argument the farmer could not confute; so he went down to the parlour and had a talk with Rose and Percival. The end of the matter was, that Percival remained and took tea with them as Rose's accepted husband. Hetty, who had gained an inkling of what had taken place, was in excellent spirits, and attended to Percival's wants so assiduously as to win from him the compliment, confidently confided to Silas:

"That she was the cleverest little woman he ever saw."

When Percival had returned to his hotel, and the farmer and his daughter retired to rest, Silas sat by the open window and watched the moonbeams play among the trees. He had no inclination to sleep. The world looked dreary enough to him now, and it seemed as if life contained nothing worth the living for.

It had been arranged that Rose was to accompany her husband, when they were married, to his home in England. The farmer was to go with them, he could not live away from his darling, and Silas was to have the farm.

Rose insisted upon yielding up her share to him. Percival, who had been rather surprised on discovering the true relation that Silas bore to Rose, also insisted upon this. He had wealth enough, he wished no dower with his bride. How happy Silas would have felt, at any other time, in the possession of the Interval Farm; but of what value was the empty casket when the jewel was gone?

A light form came gently to his side, and a hand was laid upon his shoulder. He looked up, half expecting to see Rose—he was somewhat disappointed to find it was Hetty.

"It's only me!" said that sharp-featured young lady, seeing the expression upon his face. "You don't appear to be very glad to see me—and yet, through all these years, I have been as much a sister to you as Rose."

"So you have, Hetty," he answered, kindly. "Don't look as if you hadn't a friend in the world," continued Hetty, talking more like a mother than a sister. "There's other women in the world besides Rose—your market ain't spoiled yet. Don't mope like a silly boy, crying for something you can't get—be a man. Complete the good work you have begun, and don't make her feel unhappy by letting her see that you are still grieving for her."

"Ah, Hetty," he sighed, "you do not know what love is."

"Don't I!" she cried, impulsively, "you couldn't love her a bit better than I—"

Hetty broke down suddenly, and her face became crimson. The moonbeams were shining full upon her features, and his eyes were upon her. He had been blind not to have read the truth there.

"You love me," he asked, sadly. "Strange! I passed you by, who are more suited to me, to waste my best affection upon one who could never return it."

Hetty was silent; mortification and dismay at the sudden revelation of her well-kept secret tied her tongue. Silas mused. To leave Rose under the impression that he still pined for her, was but to half complete his work. He should never love again—and here was poor Hetty who had loved him, even as he loved Rose. He could make her happy—and why not? An orphan like himself—perhaps heaven had ordained that they should come together.

"Hetty," he said, in his old honest way, "would you be willing to marry me, knowing how dearly I have loved Rose?"

"Yes," she answered; "for that love will soon fade from your heart, and a new love will spring up for me. She was too much of a lady for you, you need a farmer's wife—a worker, like yourself."

In after years, remembering these words, Silas acknowledged their truth.

The village was rather astonished when the double marriage took place, and the good neighbours never rightly understood how it was that Silas Brooke married Hetty Waters, and a strange gentleman married Rose Mayfern; but the interested parties were satisfied with the arrangement, and I do not think either had ever cause during the prosperous years that heaven allotted them, to regret the vows they took upon that summer's day.

G. L. A.

## ABBOTSWOLD.

### CHAPTER XVI.

It was evening; and, as fate would have it, a furious storm was driving the rain-drops against wall and casement; while the howling blast, finding ready instruments for its use in the swaying branches of the great old oaks, and in the sharp angles of tower and bartizan, piped forth such wild music as suits the demon of the elementary war.

The marquise and my lady were in the library, where a fire blazed upon the hearth, casting its glaring red light upon their faces, pale and haggard. By-and-bye their daughter entered, and they moved back from the hearth towards the centre-table, the marquise rising and placing a chair for the newcomer, so that she should sit before them.

Agnes was not a stranger to the purpose of this meeting, though she knew not how far her father had as yet committed himself.

She, too, was pale; but not with such a pallor as marked her parents' countenances. Her face was not haggard like theirs, betraying inner storm and tempest; but it was the speechless agony of a breaking heart, that had stolen the blood away from her cheeks, and set the seal of patient suffering upon her pure brow.

Her father was the first to speak. His voice was low and tremulous, breaking up at intervals, as though the tones frightened himself.

He told his daughter what had been done—gave her a full account of the proceedings which his opponent had instituted, and of the efforts which he had put forth to meet and overcome them. Then he told of the final result, and pointed to her the picture of her parents driven from their home—beggars for evermore!

When she wondered at this, he explained to her that Albert Percy (for so he declared that the young man must now be called) could not only take the

whole property as it now stood, but that he could also claim all the rents which had been collected and expended during the last ten years.

Alas—beggars they were doomed to be—cast down from their high estate to a depth so low, that their very servants would pity them, and might even extend to them the hand of charity! The speaker sobbed aloud at intervals, while his wife moaned and wept in bitter anguish.

And then the marquise told his child how she might save them—if she would be the willing wife of Albert Percy.

At this point Agnes, who had sat thus far like one in a terrible trance, was shaken for a moment by a convulsive shudder, and on the next she would have fallen backwards had not her mother caught her.

"Where am I?" was the first question from Agnes, as consciousness returned.

"You are here, my child. You are safe," answered her mother, still chasing her pale brow, while her father rubbed her hands. "You are safe, Agnes. Perhaps you had better retire now. We will talk some other time."

The girl put forth her hand with a sudden movement, and gazed around.

"No, no, no," she cried. "Let it be said now; I remember. You were speaking of my—of Albert Percy's offer—and I was not so strong as I thought. But I am stronger now. Go on."

"Remember, my child," said the mother, still chasing the marble brow; "it is a marquise who seeks your hand. Excepting the Howards, Albert Percy will stand highest in Norfolk."

"Ay," added the father, imploringly; "and remember one thing more. Look at me Agnes—oh, look at me, and listen."

She gazed up into his face eagerly, for his speech was of powerful intensity, and he went on slowly and earnestly:

"Behold your father and your mother, now verging towards the evening of their days, made the suffering victims of a cruel fate, about to be cast forth from the home of their ancestors, to wander evermore friendless and forlorn. But see! Our child—our own darling—stands upon the threshold of the old castle, and stretches forth her saving hands, saying: 'Father—mother—this is still your home, and shall be yours while you live! All—all is yours—these broad acres—these ancestral halls—the coronet with its honours and its dignity—the servants, as of old—the tenants—the old dependents all! No, no, my parents, not penniless—not homeless—but still at the head of the household, to do the honours and extend the hospitalities of Abbotswold, as you have done in past years! Father—mother—accept it all—'tis the gift of your child!' Agnes—oh! if you could—"

Thus far, and the marquise sank forward, with his face buried in his hands, and burst into tears, sobbing and weeping like a child.

At that moment Agnes fell from her throne of joy, and gave herself to her parents. The speech of her father had shaken her till little hold was left upon life; and now, when she saw both him and her mother sobbing as though their hearts would break—sobbing in an agony of grief from which she could relieve them, she let go the last support, and gave her life up to them.

"Father—mother!" she cried, "weep no more. I will save you!"

"But, Agnes, my child!" cried the marquise, starting up, and dashing his hand across his eyes, "can you—do you—"

She waved him back, and arose to her feet. A struggle which seemed to strain every nerve in her frame, and then she said, in a hollow, sepulchral tone, as though her body were marble, and a ghostly visitant spoke from within—a spirit with no part in her being—using not her organs:

"In heaven's name, no more now! Your child has saved you—let that be enough. Curse her not with thanks; speak to her no word of gratitude. Oh, only the hypocrite could return thanks for the heart, crushed and bleeding, that had been torn out and flung away for ever, that he might be saved the fall from opulence to honourable dependence!"

"Agnes! my child!"

"Hush! Not a word. You cannot expect me to lie to you! You shall be saved from the sacrifice—you shall still be Lord of Abbotswold—but you shall never forget that to your escutcheon should now be added a bleeding heart! The word has gone forth from my mouth. Tell Albert Callington—or, if you will, Albert Percy—that I will be his wife!"

And with this, Agnes glided from the library, flying along, through hall and corridor, as flies one who feels that her strength cannot hold out long. She reached her own chamber at length, but instead of throwing herself upon her bed, as she had felt that she should be forced to do, she sank upon her knees, and raised her clasped hands towards heaven. As she



turned her thoughts upwards, the idea surged upon her mind that she had been cruel in her speech to her parents.

She called back the burning words, as they had fallen, hot and seething from her lips, and her first word of prayer was entirely different from that which had been uppermost when she sank down. She asked heaven to forgive her!

"Oh, heaven—my father and mother—they know not what they do. Forgive them! Forgive them!"

Then she prayed for strength to support her under the trial that was before her; and when that had been done she arose to her feet. She listened awhile to the voice of the storm, and then she turned to her dressing-table. She had taken a step towards it for the purpose of removing the lamp that stood thereon, when she saw something that startled her as with the touch of an electric shock, and in an instant all the strength she had gained from her prayer forsook her, as though the shock had been from the battery that shook the firmament. It was only a rose—a tiny rose—which had been plucked from the conservatory. It had once been fresh and fragrant; but it now lay drooping and dying; its emerald leaves turned sear and crisp, and the once fair and blushing blossom now wilted and shrivelled! There it lay, where she had placed it on that happy day—in the self-same spot;—then a type of love and promise, fragrant with joy and blessing, but now a sad emblem of sorrow and distress! And he had plucked it, and as he gave it to her he had said:

"Dear Agnes, it is a rose out of season; but not so unexpected as is the joy that is mine in calling you my own! Poor little rose! Let me pin it here upon your bosom, and see how long the warmth of your heart can keep it from withering!"

She remembered the words as though they had but just been spoken. She clasped her hands—the name of the loved one fell from her lips—and then, with a low, wailing cry of agony, she tottered to the bedside and fell down upon the pillow—sank down to weep, moan, and sob through the long and weary hours.

On the following morning Agnes did not go down to breakfast. Later her father went to her chamber, and sat down by her side.

"Agnes, Albert Percy will be here to-day to receive his answer. I—I—"

The marquis stammered, and for a time his voice failed him. Was it pain that affected him thus? Was it sympathy for his suffering child? Did he think of clasping her in his arms, and bearing her away from the gilded prison of woe and agony? She gazed up into his face to see what she could read there.

Ah! the maiden's perceptions were quick and keen, and when she saw the marks upon her father's face her heart sank within her. There was no trace of such sympathy as she sought—no sign of hesitation on his part in the work he had planned. What she saw was a fear—a dread—that his child might fail him. She could not be mistaken. The deep, harrowing eagerness of prayerful entreaty was plainly visible; and the emotional shadows, as they flitted across the corrugated brow, seemed to say: "Oh, for heaven's sake, my child, do not forsake us in our great distress!" While his lips went on with the spoken words:

"I know you said, last evening, that you would save your parents from the dread calamity which overhung them, but—but—" (again that same eager prayer of the soul, speaking silently forth from every look of the working features)—"you have had time for reflection. Your parents could not live in the knowledge that their child cursed them."

With a quick, low wail of pain, Agnes put forth her hand, and presently she said:

"I will not live in the knowledge that my parents, if they do not directly curse me, are yet bearing in their lives a curse, from which they will believe I might have saved them, and would not."

"Agnes, you are too severe."

"My father," cried the unhappy girl, grasping him by the arm as she thus spoke, "answer me this: if I should refuse to marry the son of Agatha Callington—"

"Agnes!" interrupted the marquis, so peremptorily that she stopped instinctively, "why do you pervert the truth by presenting its lesser side, while the greater bears so much weight? Call him the son of my own elder brother, born in wedlock, and by right, lord of all this wide domain! His veins give flow to blood as pure and noble as any in the realm."

"So be it, then," resumed the maiden, speaking more low, but yet firmly and bravely. "If I should refuse to marry this man, you and my mother would go forth into a life of sorrow and repining; and you would say in your hearts that your child might have saved you had she been willing. Would it not be so?"

"Would it not be so?" echoed the marquis, chang-

ing the inflection to suit his application of the question.

"Enough!" articulated Agnes, sinking back and folding her hands in her lap. "You have my answer. Give it to the applicant for my hand when he comes."

The marquis moved uneasily in his seat, evidently very much dissatisfied with the result of the conference, and yet unable to see how he could bring the matter under any different light. At length, with a long-drawn breath, he said:

"And if he should wish to receive the answer from your own lips?"

She had expected this, and she promptly replied: "I will see him."

"But—Agnes—"

"Fear not, sir. I shall not attempt to hurt his feelings. I shall not even blame him. I shall simply tell him the truth. Dear father, if you love me, press me no farther."

Could Agnes Percy have known the feelings that rent her father's heart as he slowly wended his way towards his own apartment, she would have pitied him from the innermost depths of her soul. An anguish more keen and bitter he was destined never to know; and yet he had not the courage to turn about and lift the burden from the heart of his stricken child, and himself assume the consequence of the successful claim of the rival heir.

The hour came at length, and Agnes Percy stood in the presence of the man whom she said she would marry. He had come to her by her own permission, and as he entered the apartment, she arose, and politely offered him a seat.

A few formal words of greeting, and then Agnes looked into Albert Callington's face; for she would not yet, in her heart, give him any other name. She saw that he had improved outwardly since she saw him last; but he was still a man of evil mind, and of a low grade of intellect. Compared with Rupert St. John he was—Oh! there could be no comparison between two such men. Away up in the celestial sphere, among the gods and the heroes, rose the image of St. John, leaving this poor earth-worm grovelling in the dust of ignorance and debasement. In vain had the youth assumed rich and well-made clothing; and in vain had he schooled himself to bow and smile, and speak fine-sounding words. She looked beneath all this, and saw in the man before her a creature of low instincts and base passions. In the bare outline of his features there was much comeliness, and something of manly beauty—for he was a Percy, his face plainly told it—but when she had given him the credit of this accident of inheritance, she was forced to stop. Had her relations towards him been other than they were, she might have pitied him, in that he had inherited his father's evil qualities without the virtues; but as it was, she had no pity to give. She could only shudder, knowing that he was at heart a villain. She had heard how he treated his mother, and how he treated others with whom he had come in contact; and this knowledge helped her to analyze some of those shades of expression, which might otherwise have puzzled her.

By-and-bye the son of Albert Percy told her why he had come, and plainly asked her if she would be his wife.

She answered him that she had consented to sacrifice herself, to save her parents from being driven forth from their home. She told him that she could give him her hand, but that her heart was not hers to give.

"I suppose you love the gallant captain?"

If he had remembered himself, he would not have said this; but it had been spoken, and he was really pleased to observe how it cut the girl to the heart; for she gasped and pressed her hands to her bosom, and turned as pale as death.

But it was only for a second. Quickly the blood came rushing back, and Agnes proudly answered:

"You ask for my hand—my hand I give. Had you asked for my heart I should have told you, nay; and I should have told you, too, that its secrets were a sacred treasure, entirely beyond your power to know."

She saw a flush of anger upon his face, and fearing what might drop from the quivering lip, she quickly added:

"But, sir, this much I deem it no more than just that I should promise you. From the hour that sees me, in the eyes of the law, your wife, I shall be true to my vows as far as heaven gives me power. Love and honour are not creatures of the will. Truth and obedience you may command."

Never did she look more beautiful, and even he who had been reared in a fisherman's cot, and whose eye had heretofore taken cognizance alone of physical loveliness, perceived something in the intense beauty of the flushed face and beaming eyes, glowing with high and holy impulse, that appealed to his senses

with a new and pleasing power. The thought that he had conquered the will of this high-born, beautiful maiden, to whom princes might have bent their knee, and who had, to his knowledge, refused the offered hands of some of the highest and wealthiest nobles in the land, was to him a source of such glorification and exultation as he had never even hoped to possess. But he had gained it, and he was content.

"Dear lady," he said, smiling and bowing, "I hope I may never have occasion to command you; and if you give me your hand, and pledge of your truth, I will not complain. I shall try and win your love. If I do not succeed, the suffering will not be all mine. But enough of this. I will not detain you longer. The sweet promise of your fair hand is joy enough for now. Allow me." He arose and took her hand, and raised it to his lips. "And now, for a brief time, adieu. It will not be for long, my love."

She stood where he had left her, gazing vacantly into the blank space he had last occupied. A short time so, and then she raised her hand, and saw where he had kissed it.

With a wild, furious motion, she dashed it down out of her sight, as a thing polluted; and in a moment more she was crouching down upon the floor, sobbing and moaning, her face buried in her hands, and her body swaying to and fro, keeping time with the sad cadence of her wailing notes.

And as Agnes Percy sat thus a man was passing out from the castle, with proud and confident step, speaking these words aloud to himself:

"The work goes most bravely! I shall have the high-born beauty for my wife, and then—then we'll see who'll be Lord of Abbotswood!"

(To be continued.)

#### MRS. PAGE'S DAUGHTER-IN-LAW.

"ARE we almost there, Charles?"

"Do you see that old moss-brown roof, with the huge brick chimney, peeping up among the apple blossoms? That is the house."

Laura's heart gave an involuntary throb. Would they welcome her as a new daughter? Would they love her? Charles Page smiled as he read the thoughts passing through her mind.

"Do not fear, Laura; I do not know who could help loving you!"

Laura smiled a little doubtfully; she could hardly expect the whole world to look at her with her young husband's eyes.

Old Mrs. Page stood at the farmhouse door in her best black silk, with her "company cap" and white ribbons, as the stage coach rolled up—a hard-featured old lady, with silver-streaked hair brushed away from her wrinkled forehead, and hands on which the network of veins stood up like knotted cord. Her welcoming kiss was like the peck of a bird of prey—so cold and hard did it seem against Laura's cheek.

"Mother!" whispered Laura, softly.

"I am very glad to see you, Mrs. Charles," said the old lady.

"So you are Charles's new wife, hey?" said Farmer Page, from the sitting-room; "and a tall, well-grown girl, too. Come in, come in! Tea's most ready, and I dare say you'll be glad of a cup."

There was something that passed like the chilled breath of an iceberg across Laura's heart as she entered, leaning on her husband's arm. It was not the welcome she had expected and hoped for; and involuntarily she felt that her mother-in-law's cold, criticising eye was upon her, and with no favourable glance.

"I s'pose you've been brought up to work?" said Mrs. Page, senior.

No; Laura could not say that she had.

"Can you wash and iron your husband's shirts?"

"No."

"Can you make bread?"

"I have never tried."

"Cannot you cook at all?"

"I am afraid not, ma'am."

"Humph!"

At this stage, Charles, who had been watching the deepening colour on Laura's cheek with some annoyance, broke in:

"But she can speak two or three different languages, mother, and paint beautifully, and I wish you could read some of the poetry she has written."

"Humph!" again enunciated the mother-in-law. "Languages, painting, and poetry—stuff won't make the kettle boil, you'll find, young lady."

"She has taught in a seminary, mother," the young husband interposed, "where she has had no opportunity to learn the useful things you speak of. All in good time. Rome wasn't built in a day."

But Mrs. Page, with her thin lips set close together, was busying herself about the tea-table. She

need not have taken the trouble. Laura's appetite was pretty effectually destroyed.

"Come, darling," said Charles, "I want to show you the path to the spring in the woods."

Old Mrs. Page looked contemptuously after them. "That's all she's worth," she muttered, "to look at pretty things and listen to honeyed speeches. I wonder where Hiram Page would be now, if I had been cut out after that pattern?"

In short, it was an infinite relief all round when the short visit came to an end, and Charles took his young wife back to his home. Laura was depressed and melancholy, and Charles, though he would not have confessed it even to himself, was a little prejudiced by the strong opinions expressed by both father and mother on the subject of his matrimonial choice.

Scarcely six months had passed over the horizon of their married life, however, when clouds came to darken it.

Charles Page was only a clerk in a bank, but his humble salary had proved a sufficiency for himself and Laura. Consequently, when one night returning late from business, he slipped and broke his right ankle so badly that a severe illness followed, it brought the grim phantom poverty nearer to them than was at all pleasant.

"We won't let the old folks at home know of it, Laura," said the young clerk, trying to speak cheerfully. "I'm afraid they're in trouble themselves about that note my father endorsed for old Millman, and I dare say we shall get along nicely with a little economy."

Laura was sitting by her husband's bedside one dreary November twilight, when there was an unwonted bustle at the door below—a throwing down of trunks and shrill articulation of voices. She hastened to the head of the stairs—it was Farmer Page and his wife!

"We've no home of our own, now," said Mrs. Page, senior, speaking bitterly and loud, "and we've come to stay with you and your wife, son Charles."

"No home of your own, mother?"

"No—thanks to your father, who would endorse that note for old Millman, and he's lost every farthing—just what he might have expected, I think—and we're as good as beggars in our old age! But, dear me, what's the matter, Charles?"

Then followed explanations and recitals, much to the relief of Farmer Page, who had instinctively shrunk into the background, until the violence of his wife's wrath should have subsided.

"And you're no better off than we be!" sighed Mrs. Page, glancing sadly around the room. "Ah—h! this is what comes of fine ladies for wives!"

It was not exactly a logical conclusion, but it seemed to afford wondrous consolation to the good old woman, who immediately untied her bonnet strings, and prepared to "make herself at home."

"Is this money in the pocket-book all you've got left, Charles?" demanded his mother, about ten days after their unexpected arrival.

"Yes, mother."

"Only one pound; and the rent will come due to-morrow, and there's a bill for groceries, enough to make one's hair stand on end—and as for milk, I don't see how men can sleep at night who charge five pence a quart for milk that's half water. And nobody knows how much the doctor's bill is going to be, and Bridget's wages—but I'll discharge her to-morrow morning. If your wife can't do the work of these few rooms, I can."

Charles Page closed his eyes wearily, and pressed his hand upon his throbbing temples. It was not the best course of treatment for a feverish patient, this enumeration of domestic troubles, but old Mrs. Page had never been ill herself, and consequently made little allowance for the weak and worn-out state of her son.

"I don't know what Laura's doing up in her room," said the old lady. "She had a great deal better buy a wash-tub and a bar of yellow soap, and do the family washing instead of putting it out, and spending her time writing poetry."

"Laura has been the most tender and devoted of nurses to me, and I will listen to no aspersions of her conduct!" interrupted Charles Page, indignantly.

Mrs. Page screwed her lips tightly together, as she turned the solitary note over and over, but she ventured on no more derogatory remarks down stairs. Creeping like a venerable pussy-cat up the staircase, she entered her daughter-in-law's apartment with the stealthy movement peculiar to that quadruped.

"Fainting, eh, Mrs. Charles? Let me tell you I think it's your duty to attend a little more to the housework, and less to your fine amusements up here. Do you see this note? It's all we've got left in the house and if you think it's going to support you in idleness you're mistaken."

"Is Charles alone, mother?"

"Yes, he is alone—but as I was saying—"

"I think we had better join him."

Old Mrs. Page hobbled down after Laura's graceful movements, grumbling as she went.

"Laura," said her husband, with a troubled face, "my mother tells me that our funds are getting low—"

"Only one pound left," said the old lady, clutching it greedily, as if fearful that it would take wings unto itself and vanish into thin air.

"And," resumed her son, "what are we to do?"

"Might as well ask advice of the biggest wax doll in the shop around the corner," grumbled Mrs. Page, *sotto voce*.

"See, Charles."

Laura had opened her little portemonnaie and was showering out its contents on the bed, close to Charles's hand.

"Count it, dear!"

"My gracious me!" ejaculated the old lady, "where did all these notes come from?"

"Twenty pounds! My dearest wife, how did you get this?"

Laura's cheek flushed high with pride and gratification.

"My little picture of 'Spring in the Wilderness' was sold this morning, Charles, and I have orders for two more, at the same price!"

"Twenty pounds! For a trumpery picture!" gasped Mrs. Page, senior, under her breath, yet looking at Laura now with deference and admiration dawning in her face. The woman who could earn twenty pounds by a week's work was not to be despised!

Charles Page's eyes filled with tears; he pressed his lips lovingly to the hand whose whiteness Mrs. Page had so despised.

"My dear little wife; my help-mate indeed!" he murmured, softly.

"You must not wear that serious face any longer, Charles," she said, hiding the depth of her emotion by an assumed playfulness. "We shall have plenty of money now, to last us all until you get well, and mother—" she spoke it with an effort, "shall lay it out for us, after the most economical fashion!"

But, to Laura's astonishment, the old lady jumped up, and threw her arms around her neck with a curious hysterical sob.

"Laura, I've been wrong all this time—I've been a conceited, obstinate old fool!"

"Mother!"

"I have—and there's no use making a secret of it! I've scorned and despised you, and been as ugly as Cain to you, and now—"

"Now we will forget it all, and begin anew, mother," said Laura, soothing the old woman's agitation with a tender kiss.

It was not until Mrs. Page the elder had had her attention called to the pre-eminent necessity of an apple pudding for dinner, that she left off reproaching herself and crying on Laura's shoulder.

"For I have been such an old Witch of Endor to you," she remarked, most truthfully, as she went into the kitchen.

And Charles Page, smiling up in his wife's face as the door closed, said:

"You have conquered her, Laura!" A. R.

## FACETIE.

"WHAT is the annual corn crop of Kentucky?" asked a foreign tourist of a Kentuckian. "I can't exactly say," replied the Kentuckian; "but I know it's enough to make all the whisky we want, besides what is wasted for bread."

FOUND AT LAST!—The reason why the sapient directors of certain railway companies have raised the fares;—it must have been done "to effect a clearance"—of their passengers!—*Fun.*

"BONNET, A COVERING FOR THE HEAD."—*Johnson.* Inquisitive Parent (inspecting milliner's bill): "By the way, my dears, I see there are bonnets charged for here. I never see you wear any."—*Fun.*

WORTHY OF MINT-ION.—Simkins sports a spade guinea at the end of his watch-guard. Tomkins is envious thereof, and twits him with being out of the fashion, as sixpences are most worn just now.—*Fun.*

## PEACE AND WAR.

(A Tableau.)

Guardman: "What the doose is that bobby after, hanging about Mary Hann's gate like this here?"

Policeman: "What business has that long idiot a-leanin' against the gate where Mary Hann lives?"—*Fun.*

WHINNYING.—The Prince of Wales (says a contemporary) is expected to stay with Sir Watkin Wynne at Wynnastay. He was, according to the journal we

quote, "expected at Wynnastay on Saturday." Of course, this was nonsense. His Royal Highness could not arrive at Wynnastay till after Tuesday—obviously the week consists of Monday, Tuesday, Wynnastay, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday.—*Fun.*

## SHAKESPEARIAN HINT.

When kings, queens, or princes travel now-a-days the mayor and corporation of every town insist upon presenting their addresses. We do not reprehend their loyalty, but their tediousness. Shakespeare has given us a model both for mayors and princes in his *Richard III.*, Act iii., Scene 1, where the Prince of Wales having just arrived in London (London, mind, with a Lord Mayor the Mayor of Mayors) enters his chamber with the Duke of Buckingham and Gloster.

Gloster: "My lord, the Mayor of London comes to greet you."

(Enter the Lord Mayor and his train.)

Mayor: "God bless your Grace with health and happy days."

That is the extent of his address. Admirably comprehensive. Why say more? To him H.R.H. deigns the following gracious reply:

Prince: "I thank you, good my lord; and thank you all." *Exeunt Mayor, &c.*

The stage direction at the end points the moral. The Bard of Avon was not for an age but for all time, in which is included A.D. 1868.—*Punch.*

## THE COLOSSEUM.

"*Sic transit gloria!*"

Troja fuit! The Colosseum in the Regent's Park, one of the seven wonders of the world, and so called from being at one time the residence of the Colossus of Rhodes, has been dismantled, and all its properties have been brought to the hammer, for the use of anyone who would pay on the nail.

I remember, I remember,

When I was a little boy,

How I came home in December

My fond parents to annoy.

But my pretty maiden aunt

Was kind and gave to me

A sort of show galanty,

A funny thing to see.

I remember I was taken

By my aunt's peculiar cabby,

For to hear the rafters shaken

By the Choir in the Abbey.

Nor the service, nor Te Deum,

Nor the sights of Christmas time,

Could approach the Colosseum,

Save, perhaps, the Pantomime.

I remember, I remember,

All those Ruins in the grounds,

And the classic broken pillars

(Sold for something like three pounds.)

And the statues! One of Jason

Was a noble work of art;

They were knocked down to a mason,

Who removed them in his cart.

At the Panorama great I'm

Looking back with sad delight,

It was London Seen by Day-time,

It was London Seen by Night.

But it suited no one's coffers

On the selling afternoon,

And I heard of no great offers,

For old Mister Bradwell's "Moon."

A statue of King Wil-li-am

The Fourth was then knocked down,

I weep—perhaps I silly am—

The bid was half-a-crown.

The auctioneer declined to let

It go for next to nix,

But took the highest he could get—

It fetched just one-pound-six.

Sir Robert Peel, ten feet in height,

From pedestal to nob,

'Twas stone or marble, purely white,

It fetched—ah, no!—ten bob.

The end—five pounds or under

Bought a lot which all ears dinned,

"Three Rain Barrels and One Thunder,"

"Then Two Crashes and One Wind."

Fit ending, awful, fright'ning!

For the place now gone to smash,

Stricken down by resin-lightning,

And the iron thunder-crash.

But sunk in thunder-crashes

It lies on Regent's plain;

Like a Phoenix from its ashes,

Shall it ever rise again?

*Punch.*

A RUMOUR is "going the round of the papers" to the effect that a certain well-known litterateur is shortly to appear as "Falstaff." If this re-



port proves no *canard* we may expect to find other men of talent following in the wake of so illustrious an author as the one to whom we have referred. Always anxious to provide our readers with the earliest information, we beg to give a list of "appearances" likely to come off:—Mr. A. C. Swinburne as "Comus;" Dean Stanley as "Sir Pertinax MacSycophant;" Mr. Charles Reade as the "Fool" (*King Lear*); and Mr. Dion Boucicault as "Jeremy Diddler."—*Tomahawk.*

NEWS FROM THE WEST.—Very like a *Wale(s)*. Coroner Pierce's ability!—*Tomahawk.*

IMPERIAL VULGARITY.—It is rumoured in official circles that the Emperor Napoleon recently observed, *apropos of La Lanterne*, "This is a pitiful affair—there is nothing *mitey* about it. No, *this* Rochefort is not the cheese!"—*Tomahawk.*

I NEVER dine with that old millionaire, Nummus, but he tells me what he has saved on his fish bill during the week. This looks like robbing the shrine of Neptune to gild the statue of Vanity.—*Tomahawk.*

#### A FORTUNE FOR THE ASKING.

The military profession is at last becoming quite remunerative. The Bar, the Church, and Medicine have long had their prizes to bestow; but until lately a soldier has had nothing to look forward to but an insufficient income for the best years of his life, with the remote though possible contingency of a regimental colonelcy (worth a thousand a-year) in his extreme old age. Now, however, this is all to be changed. The Duke of Cambridge has announced, in a special general order, that the post of Instructor in Military History, at Sandhurst, having become vacant, officers commanding regiments and corps may send in the names of any officers under their command who may think themselves qualified for the appointment, the salary for which will be 400*l.* a-year, inclusive of all military pay and allowances.

Here is a chance for the twenty thousand or so young men who hold commissions in Her Majesty's army. It is not yet stated what the qualifications for the Professorship of Military History at Sandhurst may be; but whatever they are, we should think that the applications would be pretty numerous. If the army does not become popular as a lucrative profession when an appointment worth 400*l.* a-year is given away without purchase, we can only deplore that we live in an unreasonable age. Unfortunately, there are people who think that the chance of a place worth 400*l.* a-year (the chance, by the way, being about 15,000 to 1 against getting it) is an insufficient inducement to warrant them putting their children into a profession which is generally voted as dull as it is expensive, and as prejudicial to morality as it is hopelessly uninteresting. However, we must do the Horse Guards the justice to admit that they have made the most of the little plum which they have been able to rescue from the vortex of patronage.—*Tomahawk.*

#### HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

GREEN COLOUR FOR SWEETMEATS.—A long article upon the sad case of poisoning by coloured sweetmeats has been published by Professor Artus, the principal facts of which are given in a recent number of Dr. Rottger's *Notizblatt*. At the conclusion of his paper, the worthy professor shows how a beautiful green colour, devoid of poisonous properties, can be obtained, and appears, moreover, to be very economical.—5 grs. of saffron are shaken up with  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of distilled water, and the mixture allowed to stand twenty-four hours; at the same time, 4 grs. of indigo carmine are shaken up with  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of distilled water, and the mixture also allowed to stand for twenty-four hours. At the end of this time, the two solutions are mixed together, which produce a very fine green solution capable of colouring no less than 5 lb. of sugar.

WATER COOLERS.—We all know that cold water during the summer is one of the greatest luxuries. When it is generally understood that evaporation produces cold, it will be evident that any vessel or material that favours evaporation will induce this result. Now, all porous and absorbent vessels are of this character. Pottery not glazed is porous. A linen cloth dipped into water is porous, absorbs water, and when exposed to the air the water evaporates, producing cold; hence, if any vessel be covered with a damp cloth, the interior will be colder than the exterior. A water cooler is a porous vessel, which allows evaporation to take place on its outer surface, thus cooling the contents. The water coolers, as sent to us from Staffordshire, have, however, one fault; they are not sufficiently porous; hence there is only a very slow infiltration from the

inner to the outer surface, and any minute organic substance that may be in the water is arrested by the crock. After a time, this organic matter, it is often observed, undergoes decomposition, giving a musty, earthy odour to the water that may be in the vessel. When this is the case, it should be cleaned both inside and out, with an ounce or two of strong muriatic acid, rubbing the exterior with a flannel wet with the acid, followed with clean hot water. After this treatment the vessel will be, as before, a good water cooler.

LEMON KALI.—A teaspoonful of this compound in a tumblerful of fresh cold water forms a very agreeable effervescent summer drink. When made, it must be preserved in a dry place, and in well-corked bottles, otherwise it will soon be spoiled. To make it, take one pound of powdered white sugar, half a pound of bicarbonate of soda, half a pound of citric acid, powdered, and half a drachm of essence of lemon. Sift the whole well together, then put it into dry, wide-mouthed bottles. Tartaric acid may be used instead of the citric acid at less expense, but it is not so good for general use. Citric acid is the true acid of the lemon; tartaric acid is derived from grape leaves, tamarinds and other fruit. The pleasing flavour of lemon kali depends much upon the quality of the essence of lemon, which rapidly spoils in druggists' shops, and smells like turpentine. See that you have good and fresh essence of lemon.

#### FIVE THOUSAND A-YEAR.

HAD I the wings of a dove,  
Where do you think I would flee?  
"No doubt, very far above  
This naughty low world and me!"  
Never, oh never, my love;  
What, without thee, were heaven?  
If only the wings of a dove  
For an hour to me were given,  
Over the bitter sea-foam,  
Ah! how fast would I fly  
To the land that was once my home;  
You know it as well as I.  
The land of the torrent and mountain,  
And the hearts so friendly and true,  
Where we lingered by many a fountain,  
And lake that was deep and blue.  
A very fine land it may be  
For the great, or the proud, caring naught  
For sunshine and laughter free,  
That can never be sold or bought!  
Where letters, and friendship, and love,  
May all be enjoyed, it is clear;  
And each has its price marked above,  
Quite plainly—"Five thousand a-year!"  
E. D. C.

#### GEMS.

THE reward of good words is like dates; sweet and ripening late.

WHEN the righteous dies, it is the earth that loses. The lost jewel will always be a jewel, but the one who has lost it—well may he weep.

HE who is ashamed will not easily commit sin. There is a great difference between him who is ashamed before his own self, and him who is only ashamed before others. It is a good sign in a man to be capable of being ashamed.

SOUND economy is a sound understanding brought into action; it is calculation realized; it is the doctrine of proportion reduced to practice; it is foreseeing contingencies, and providing against them; it is expecting contingencies and being prepared for them.

WORK.—Work never killed or hurt anyone who knew how to go at it. See what order there is in nature—what sublimity and ease! How still, yet how rapid the growth of the plant. How peacefully the stars of midnight seem encamped, yet before morning whole armies of these wonderful balls of earth have been carried out of our sight. So much is achieved because all is done in order, at the right time, intently, deliberately, yet without hesitation, friction, or indecision.

GOOD ADVICE.—Don't be discouraged if occasionally you slip down by the way, and others tread over you a little. In other words, don't let a failure or two dishearten you; accidents will happen, miscalculations will sometimes be made, things will turn out differently from our expectations, and we may be sufferers. It is worth while to remember that fortune is like the skies in the month of April, sometimes cloudy, and sometimes clear and favourable; and as it would be folly to despair again in seeing

the sun, because to-day is stormy, so is it unwise to sink into despondency when fortune frowns, since in the common course of things she may be expected to smile again.

#### STATISTICS.

PASSENGER TRAFFIC WITH FRANCE.—The passenger traffic at Calais in 1867, as might have been expected from the circumstance of the Paris Exhibition, was greater than in any previous year, reaching nearly 200,000 persons, against 125,532 in 1866. It is, however, worthy of remark, that whereas in 1862, the year of the London Exhibition, 30,586 more passengers passed through Boulogne than through Calais, in 1867 about 47,000 more passengers passed by Calais than by Boulogne. The number of passengers who passed through the other ports in 1867 was, Boulogne, 153,000; Dieppe, 88,000; and Havre, 16,177.

THE BRITISH ARMY.—A Parliamentary return shows the numbers, officers and men, serving in the army in the last nine years. In 1859 the number of the regular army—cavalry, infantry, artillery, engineers, sappers, and miners—was 218,447, and the militia, volunteers, and enrolled pensioners brought the total up to 339,124. In 1860 the regular army increased to 228,791, and the large addition to the volunteer force brought the total number up to 463,511. In 1861 the regular army numbered 227,005, and a farther addition to the volunteers brought the total to 483,672. In 1862 the numbers were 215,879 and 512,245; in 1863, 222,688 and 527,211; in 1864, 216,975 and 530,058; in 1865, 213,612 and 523,391; in 1866, 204,614 and 514,680; in 1867, 201,396 regular army, and 518,770 total, including militia, volunteers, and enrolled pensioners. The volunteers were 14,981 in 1859; 133,342 in 1860; 176,571 in 1861; 173,318 in 1862; 178,260 in 1863; 186,334 in 1864; 194,430 in 1865; 197,511 in 1866; 204,029 in 1867. The distribution of the regular army in 1859 was 68,921 at home; 39,566 in the colonies; 111,960 in India—total, 218,447. In 1867, 89,198 at home; 48,280 in the colonies; 63,918 in India—total, 201,396. The amount voted for all these services was 13,532,776*l.* in 1859; 15,356,781*l.* in 1860; 16,003,572*l.* in 1861; 16,060,550*l.* in 1862; 15,463,237*l.* in 1863; 14,844,088*l.* in 1864; 14,848,447*l.* in 1865; 14,388,479*l.* in 1866.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

AFTER thirty years of agitation to abolish Middle-row, Holborn, the city authorities are erecting another in Cheapside.

THE new Queen of Madagascar has decided that five young men belonging to the first families of the island shall go to France for the purpose of receiving their education.

GAMBLING AT BADEN.—Before quitting Baden on a recent Sunday, by the two o'clock train, M. Naritachine went to the gaming-tables in travelling costume. On arriving at the station at half-past one, he said to one of his friends, "I have won while waiting for the train 200,000 francs" (8,000*l.*).

THE COLOSSEUM.—The properties belonging to the Colosseum were brought to the hammer recently. The far-famed "picture of London," which covered a space of 24,000 square feet, was bought for 95*l.*, while the pictures of "London by Night" and "Paris by Moonlight," were purchased for something under 30*l.* each.

PERAMBULATORS.—The Hackney Local Board have commenced a crusade against perambulators, and directed proceedings to be taken against wheelers thereof on foot-pavements. When employed for the development of rickets and spinal curvature in young children they are sufficiently detestable on footpaths, but when employed by tradespeople to send out goods in, the nuisance on crowded flags becomes unbearable. It is a fact that one poultryer in a certain district of South London keeps three for the sole purpose of delivering things to his customers.

EXTORTION AT BALE RAILWAY STATION.—A Bale paper states that the keeper of the buffet at the railway station charged Queen Victoria and suite of thirty persons 700 francs for a breakfast of coffee, eggs, and cold meat, being at the rate of 23 francs a head. The Bale people are very indignant at this extortion, but the *restaurateur* would probably justify himself as the English innkeeper did who presented George III. with a bill of one guinea for a slice of bread and one egg. The King, while paying the money, observed that eggs must be very scarce in that part of the country. "No, your majesty," was the reply, "eggs are plentiful enough, but King's visits are rare."

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## NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. N.—See our reply to "H. O. Morris."

A. SUBSCRIBER.—You may adopt any name you please.

WIDOW.—You must pay the taxes, otherwise the collector can detain.

J. A. S. K.—You cannot legally marry without your parents' consent, under 21 years of age.

MACHIAVO.—You can obtain a medical degree at the University you name. Apply to the secretary, or Dean.

ENGINEER.—The man you name is a notorious quack; avoid him, and apply to a respectable medical man.

JULIUS.—Copley Vandye Fielding, the landscape painter, was born in 1787, and died in 1885.

LUCK.—True generosity of the heart is more displayed by deeds of minor kindness, than by acts which partake of ostentation.

EMILY.—Tremolando implies the reiteration of a note or chord with great rapidity, so as to produce a tremulous kind of motion.

THOMAS FLYNN, (Dublin).—Try Pitman's system of Phonography. Apply to Messrs. Pitman and Co., Publishers, Paternoster-row.

A. THOMAS ONE.—You must make personal application at the hospital, in Guildford-Street, before the child is twelve months old.

A. Z.—Any bookseller will supply you with a work on Etiquette; price three-pence, or sixpence. Apply to Simpkin and Marshall's, Stationers'-Hall Court, E.C.

T. F. K.—You can legally claim the rent due. The short lapse of time will make no difference. Why not place it in the hands of a collector?

MADAME DE LA CROIX.—We must decline to give private addresses. The person you mention is an advertising quack; avoid him, and consult a respectable practitioner.

ERNEST.—Cushie-pieces were invented by Richard Leake, in 1675, the master gunner of the Royal Prince man-of-war, renowned for the bravery shown in the engagement with the Dutch Admiral, Van Tromp.

A. JACKSON.—1. The entire story in numbers is in print; there are in all 24, commencing in No. 236, and concluding in No. 260. 2. The postage by book post, that is, open at the ends, is one penny for four ounces.

GERTRAUD.—Avoid talking about yourself, praising your own works, and proclaiming your own seeds; if they are good, they will proclaim themselves; if bad, the less you say of them the better.

GRANVILLE.—When a servant buys goods for an employer's use, the master is bound to see them paid for, and it is no release for the master to say that he gave the servant money to pay for them; nor that he contracted with the servant for the latter to supply them.

PASBY AND MOSS-ROSEBURY.—1. Certainly not, unless you have been previously introduced. 2. The gentleman not having made any proposal, you cannot complain. 3. Bussing is frequently constitutional, therefore from that it is impossible to judge.

A. CONSTANT READER.—To make a claret cup, take 1 pint of claret, 1 wine-glassful of brandy, 3 of sherry, 1 bottle of soda-water, a little paring of cucumber; sugar according to taste. After being infused 5 minutes, strain and put it into the cup; a lump of ice is an improvement.

DELIN.—1. Apply to Messrs. Grindlay and Company, East India agents, bankers, &c., Parliament-street, W. 2. You can scarcely hope to obtain an appointment upon an Indian railway, if you have no interest with the directors of any particular company.

GRATTOX.—Gospellera, was the name given to the followers of Wickliffe, who first attacked the errors of popery, about 1377; he opposed the authority of the pope, the temporal jurisdiction of bishops, and is called the Father of the Reformation.

ALICE.—To remove black spots from the skin, make a lotion composed of 1 oz. of oil of sweet almonds, and 1 drachm of potash, shaken well together, then add 1 oz. of rose water, and 6 oz. of pure water; first rub the face with a rough towel, and then apply the lotion. The diet and exercise should both be regulated.

MARTHA.—Difficulties must not be made, nor sought for; they must come naturally in the course of events, else they have not their proper character, and we cannot so well encounter them; it is foolishness to climb the mountain when the proper path winds round the base, neither should we abate the hill-top when it is in sight.

HYAM.—Wearing apparel was first cut out by machinery in England in 1853. The machine, invented by Mr. Frederick Osbourn, consists of a reciprocating vertical knife working through a slot in the table that supports the pile of cloth to

be cut. The cloth being pressed up to the edge of the knife by the attendant, the knife will sever it in the direction of the lines on the upper layer. This system of cutting out is now generally adopted in the slop-work trade and, with the aid of the sewing-machine, has tended greatly to improve the condition of the persons employed in the manufacture of wearing apparel for the home and foreign markets.

JANE.—Musette is the name given to a soft and sweet kind of air in common time, from the style of which dances were often invented and called musettes. This word was also applied to a small kind of bagpipe, much employed in most European countries, and played on by certain itinerant musicians, who were called *musars*.

JOHN.—Kelson, or Kelson, one of the principal timbers in a ship; it is laid over the keel, of which it forms the interior or counterpart, and across all the timbers inside the vessel; it consists, like the keel, of several pieces scarfed together, but of only half the breadth and thickness of those of the latter.

G. BELL.—The highly useful substance called gutta-percha is procured from the sap of the *Ficus elastica*, a large forest tree, growing in the Malay Peninsula, and on the islands near it. It was made known in England, by Doctors D. Almeida and Montgomery, at the Society of Arts, in 1843. As a non-conductor of electricity, it has become an invaluable aid in constructing the submarine telegraph.

J. S.—For bait for fishing there are various kinds of paste made; some with flour and honey, cheese, potted shrimps, or any kind of compost, according to fancy, and experience of success. Late in the summer, and early in the autumn, is the proper season for roach and dace; the baits being gentles, paste, or boiled grains of wheat or barley, sunk within a few inches of the bottom.

LAURENCE.—The Institute of Actuaries is in St. James's Square, and was founded for the purpose of promoting the general efficiency of all who are engaged in the pursuits of an actuary, and for the extension and improvement of the data and methods of the science, which applies the Doctrine of Probabilities to the affairs of life; from which Life Assurances, Annuity, Reversionary Interest, and other analogous institutions, derive their principles of operation.

## VANISHES AWAY.

Golden wheat of love I sowed

In a fair and fallow mead;

Lo! the harvest hath bestowed

Tangled wealth of bitter weed.

Ever bloom to blight doth grow;

This fair fragrance of a day,

Like a wreath of summer snow,

Falls and vanishes away.

Fronds their cherub cheeks shall press

Through the shadowy leaves once more;

Puck! and know their loveliness

Hides the canker at the core!

Is this love and trivial truth?

So my life is blighted bloom;

So my life is shone ruth,

And this shade sepulchral gloom. C. D. G.

ULAC.—Dictators were supreme and absolute magistrates of Rome, appointed to act in critical times. Thus Lucius Flavius, the first Dictator, was appointed 493 B.C. This office, illustrious in the first ages of the republic, became odious by the usurpations of Sulla and Julius Cæsar; and after the death of the latter, the Roman senate, on the motion of the consul Antony, passed a decree, which for ever forbade a Dictator to exist in Rome, 44 B.C.; but Augustus became perpetual Dictator, 27 B.C., as *Imperator*.

WILKOT.—Persons disqualified to vote are those whose names do not appear upon the register of voters; persons under 21 years of age, persons of unsound mind, persons who have been convicted of bribery or perjury, government contractors, a large number of government employes, who, for the most part, are connected with the collection of the revenue, persons connected with the Metropolitan Police force, and those who within the last twelve months have received any parolial relief.

INCIDENTS BUNIONS.—1. Bunions may be checked in their early development, by binding the joint with adhesive plaster, and keeping it on as long as any uneasiness is felt. The bandage should be perfect, and it might be as well to extend it round the foot; an inflated bluncheon should be poulticed, and larger shoes worn. 12 grains of iodine, 1 oz. of lard or spermaceti, makes a capital ointment; it should be rubbed on gently twice or thrice a day. 2. Handwriting good, with the exception of being rather too small.

FRANK.—In heraldry the term Counter-changed is used when the field is of one metal, and of one tincture. Fur, and the charge upon it partakes of both. Company, or *compagnie*, is indicated by a single row of small squares, of two separate tinctures, ranged alternately; counter-company, by two rows tinctured as company; chequy, or *chequy*, by more than two rows of alternately tinctured squares. Metal must not be placed upon metal, colour upon colour, nor fur upon fur.

JAMES.—Potions exempt from filling the office of overseer, are poeas, members of parliament, magistrates, aldermen of London, clergymen, dissenting ministers, practising barristers and attorneys, members of the College of Physicians, members of the College of Surgeons, apothecaries, officers of the courts of law, officers of the army and navy, (though on half-pay), officers of the customs and excise, and persons concerned in contracts to supply goods to the workhouse, or for the use of the poor.

EUSTACE.—The Cork-tree, or *Quercus suber*, is a species of the oak; its fruit is an acorn, and its bark, when burned, makes the cork used for stopping bottles, casks, and other articles. Cork was in use among the ancients. The Egyptians made coffins of cork, which being lined with a resinous composition, preserved dead bodies from corruption. The tree grows in great abundance in the Pyrenean mountains, in other parts of Spain, France, and the north of New England. It was brought to England before 1690.

H. O. MORRIS.—The cost of a marriage licence is 3l. 10s. 2. Yes. 3. Personally at Doctors' Commons, or any Surrogate. 4. The clergyman retains the licence as a proof that he was legally empowered to perform the service. 5. Certainly, the sister of the bridegroom and her husband being

present rendered it perfectly correct. 6. If with the consent of their parents or guardians. 7. It is not necessary for the parties to be present. 8. The meaning of banns is, that the names of the contracting parties are called out by the clergyman three successive Sundays during the morning service, to afford an opportunity to any persons, wishing to prevent the marriage, to declare their reasons for so doing. 9. One of the parties alone is required to reside in the parish, where the marriage is to be performed, and that must be for fourteen days.

JERRITT.—The following will be found an excellent lotion for weak or inflamed eyes; put a piece of alum, about the size of a hazel-nut, and a piece of the best lump-sugar of the same size, into a quart of cold spring water, and stand it near a fire until the alum and sugar are dissolved; then dip a piece of lint in the mixture, and bathe the eyes with it five or six times a day. This draws the inflammation from the lids; great care must be taken to destroy the lint after bathing the eyes, and on no account must it be put in the lotion after once using.

LYDIA.—The Tallow tree is a variable fact; it grows in China, and yields an oily substance resembling tallow, and which well answers as a substitute for it. The tree is of only medium size at maturity; it would not be hardy in England. The Vernish tree is Japanese, though found also sparingly in China. This is the tree which produces the black Japan varnish, so useful an article of commerce; it resembles in general appearance the white ash tree of this country; it does not furnish its peculiar liquid in large quantities until nine or ten years old.

ALIX, twenty-one, fair, and will make a good wife. Respondent must be a respectable tradesman.

HELENA HARRIS, seventeen, dark hair, hazel eyes, good complexion, white teeth, and domesticated.

A FRENCH GENTLEMAN, thirty-nine, with 4000l. per annum. Respondent must be handsome and well educated.

HETTI, a good figure, blue eyes, with a plain education. Respondent must be dark, good looking, about twenty years of age; a tradesman or mechanic preferred.

J. K. L., twenty-two, tall, good looking, with light moustache, and has 8000l. per annum. Respondent must be pretty and dark, with hazel eyes.

M. O., twenty-three, rather tall, and is expecting an appointment under Government. Respondent must be affectionate, and not fond of gaiety, about eighteen or nineteen.

MAID OF BARNBURY, twenty-three, dark hair, medium height, lively disposition, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, fair, and a respectable tradesman.

SOPHIA, NELLIE, POLLY, and SARAH.—"Sophia and Nellie," eighteen, dark, but plain. "Polly and Sarah," seventeen, fair, with gray eyes. Respondents must be tall and handsome; money no object.

MARY MORRIS, thirty-three, tall, fair, brown hair, gray eyes, slender figure, fond of home, and very industrious, will have a little money. Respondent must not be over forty, tall, and steady.

E. H. H., nineteen, 5 ft. 4 in., and good looking, will have 7000l. when of age, and a good business. Respondent must be dark, about the same age; a respectable tradesman or mechanic's daughter preferred.

Z. Z. Z., forty-five, tall and dark, good looking, sober, and steady, and has a lucrative profession. Respondent must be a farmer's daughter, and possess a few hundreds in cash.

ANNIE AND ALICE.—"Annie," seventeen, fair, dark brown hair, blue eyes, and of a loving disposition, not very good looking. "Alice," eighteen, dark brown hair, gray eyes, and would make a good wife. Respondents must be steady, respectable tradesmen or mechanics.

FANNY JENNY, MERRY KATE, LAUGHING LIZIE, and SENSIBLE JULIA.—"Fanny Jenny," eighteen, 5 ft. 2 in., light brown hair, gray eyes, good looking, and very affectionate. Respondent must be a little taller, good looking, affectionate, about twenty or twenty-two, and fond of home. "Merry Kate," medium height, blue eyes, auburn hair, and affectionate. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome, and have a good salary. "Laughing Lizie," 5 ft., light hair, blue eyes, and affectionate. Respondent must not be more than 5 ft. 3 in., dark, and good looking. "Sensible Julia," tall, good looking, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and good looking. A mechanic preferred.

## COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

DON QUIXOTE is responded to by—"Julia," nineteen, 5 ft. 6 in., fair, Grecian nose, gray eyes, respectably connected, and domesticated.

WILLIAM by—"L. M.," thirty-six.

CHARLEY O'MALLEY by—"Missie Wilton," twenty-three, has an income of 1,000l.; and—"Annie W.," twenty-one, 5 ft. 8 in., dark complexion, with an income of 200l.

MAD H. W. by—"J. W. H."

P. MOORE by—"H. Stanbury," short, with dark moustache.

DON PEDRO by—"Lily," twenty, tall, black hair, good looking, and fond of home.

THE FAIRY by—"J. P."

HARRY REGINALD by—"A. T. S.," nineteen, dark, hazel eyes, good tempered, and thoroughly domesticated; and—"Lizzy Baby," twenty-six, medium height, good looking, and amiable.

A. L. by—"Frank Bolton," (a surveyor), twenty-six, 5 ft. 8 in., dark, fond of music.

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